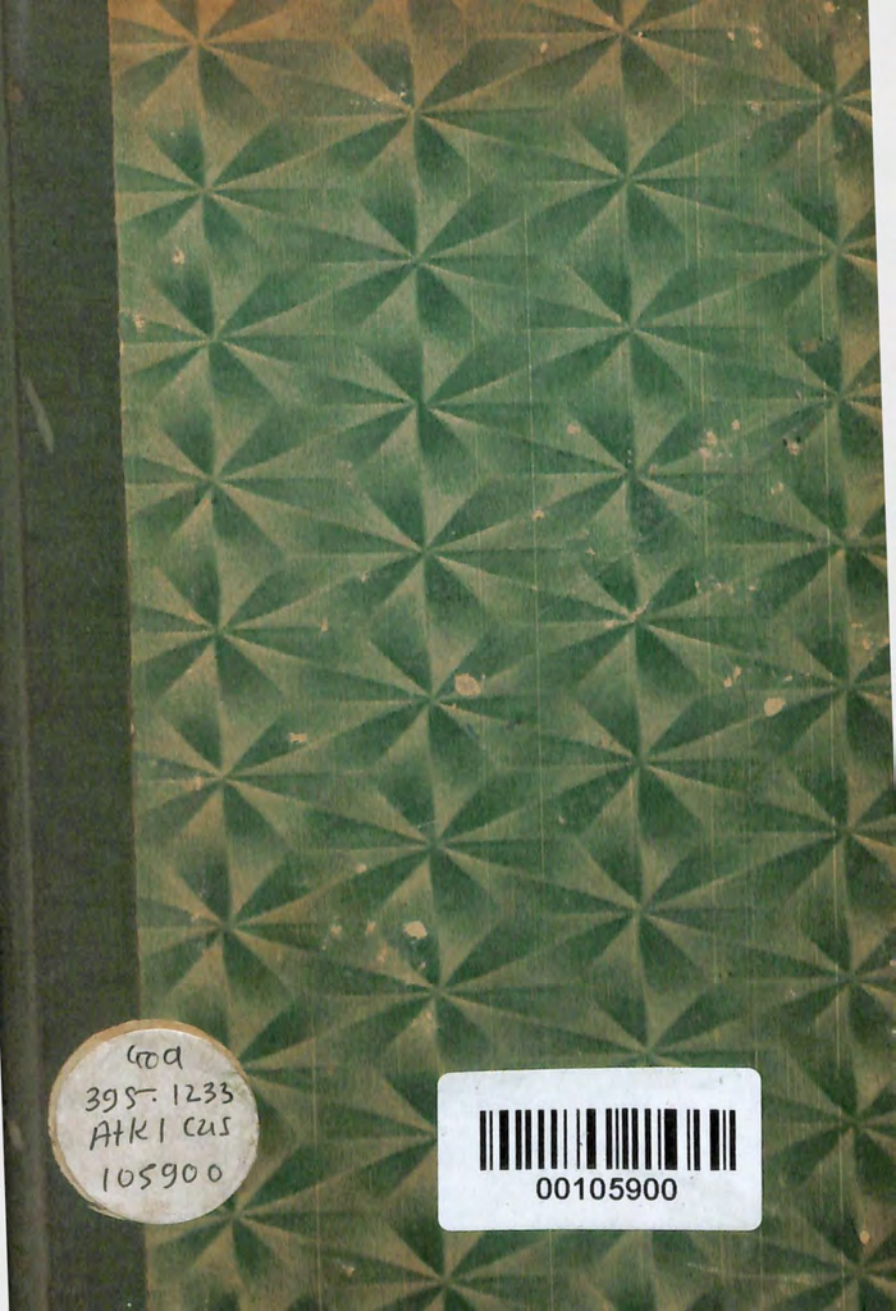
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Printed by Allen & Co.

A JOURNEY OF FLOWERS & FOUNTAINS.

"Black brows, just like the tendrils over
Flowers, whose stars of lovely light
And mingling with each other, when
The glance of beauty still more bright." Chap. IV.

London Published, for the Oriental Translation Fund, by J. Murray, 1832.

CUSTOMS AND MANNERS

OF THE

WOMEN OF PERSIA,

AND THEIR

105980.
ac

DOMESTIC SUPERSTITIONS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL PERSIAN MANUSCRIPT,

BY

BY JAMES ATKINSON, ESQ.

OF THE HONOURABLE EAST-INDIA COMPANY'S BENGAL MEDICAL SERVICE.

Women are ever masters when they like,
And cozen with their kindness: they have spells,
Superior to the wand of the magician;
And from their lips the words of wisdom fall
Like softest music on the listening ear—
O, they are matchless in supremacy!—*Firdausi.*

Would men but follow what the sex advise,
All things would prosper, all the world grow wise.—*Pope.*

LONDON: GG.n.95

PRINTED FOR THE ORIENTAL TRANSLATION FUND

OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

SOLD BY

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET;

AND PARBURY, ALLEN, & CO., LEADENHALL STREET.

M.DCCC.XXXII.

1832

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PREFACE.

This is a specimen of Persian humour, a *jeu d'esprit*, founded upon female customs and superstitions. It pretends to be a grave work, and is in fact a circle of domestic observances, treated with the solemnity of a code of laws, by five matron law-givers, assisted by two others. The original manuscript is called *Kitábi Kulsúm Naneh*, Kulsúm Naneh being the name of the principal lady-judge whose rules and maxims are therein recorded, especially on the household rights and privileges, *les petites morales*, as the French call them, of Persian women.

The oriental scholar who is devoted to the more abstruse labours of the Persian sages, may look with disdain upon productions like this of a less formidable calibre—upon efforts of a light and sportive kind,—

and think them unworthy of notice; but literature, as well as nature, has its various aspects, and the annals of mankind afford abundant instances, both of littleness and grandeur in the multifarious shades of character which are constantly presented to the view of the moralist and the philosopher. In public life every thing is, or ought to be, of high and imposing gravity; in private life, particularly in household details, every thing is generally of a contrary description. Indeed the domestic customs and superstitions of every country are for the most part absurd or trivial, and in the East often extremely ridiculous; but regarding them as features of the moral condition of society, as the freaks and resources of human nature, and forming part of the history of the human mind, in its social and moral bearings, they cannot be totally uninteresting. The customs here described, puerile as they may be thought, shew the actual state of Persian life behind the curtain; and therefore the book may be considered curious as an ex-

posé of manners and habits, which are accurately enough described, notwithstanding the amusing turn often given to the descriptions. It presents a view of domestic life, not as it ought to be, considering human conduct with reference to perfect order, but as it is, and consequently deserving of attention.

> For this is not a history, which displays
> A comprehensive view of man and things;
> 'Tis not a picture of the Raphael school,
> Or grand creation of old Angelo,—
> But a familiar portrait, such as Denner
> Was wont to paint, or Gerard Dow, each hair,
> Spot, mole, and wrinkle, faithfully depicted,
> With microscopic power.

It must be confessed, however, that little is understood in England of the real situation of women in the East, beyond the impression of their being everywhere absolute slaves to their tyrant-husbands, and cooped up in a harem, which to them can be nothing better, it is supposed, than a prison! Like some enthusiasts, who fancy England the only land of liberty and happiness, because

other countries do not act and feel in the same way, we think the women in Persia or India oppressed and degraded, because they do not possess and exercise exactly the same rights and privileges as our own.

'Tis very kind in them to feel for others,
Ten thousand miles off—but 'tis all misplaced;
Sweet souls there are, who think mankind are brothers,
And woman, not at liberty, disgraced;
Hence they are full of sympathy; another's
Distress to share, is generous, not a waste
Of human feeling; and with this persuasion,
They pity on without discrimination.

But they are wrong; for what is the fact? Many persons in England, observes a native Persian on this subject, believe that Mohammed has declared women have no souls! If you read the Korán, he adds, you will find that our Prophet not only ranks women with men as true believers, but particularly ordains that they shall be well-treated and respected by their husbands; he has, indeed, secured that, by establishing their right to dowers as well as claims of inheritance.* He

* See "Sketches of Persia."

has also put it out of the power of a husband to hurt the reputation of his wife, unless he can produce four witnesses of her guilt; and should he have witnessed that himself, he must swear four times to the fact, and then by a fifth oath imprecate the wrath of God if he is a liar. Even after this, should the wife go through the same ceremony, and imprecate the wrath of God upon her own head if her husband does not swear falsely, her punishment is averted; or if she is divorced, her whole dower must be paid to her, though it involve the husband in ruin.* Kings and rulers indulge in a plurality of wives and mistresses; these undoubtedly are immured within high walls, and are kept during life like slaves. But

* "The Mahometans," says Chardin, "hold for lawful the renewing of marriages dissolved, and that they may dissolve and renew and dissolve three times; but not after the third time. A fourth, however, may be contracted, but only on this strange condition: the old wife must marry another husband, live with him forty days, and then be divorced. This makes her eligible to remarry her original spouse!"

the great and powerful, who alone have such establishments, are not in the proportion of one to ten thousand of the population of the country. If a person of inferior rank marries a woman of respectable connexions, she becomes mistress of his family; and should he have only one house, he cannot place another on an equality without a certainty of involving himself in endless trouble and vexation, if not disgrace. The dower usually settled on such a lady, added to other privileges, and an unlimited authority over her children and servants, give her much importance, and she is supported by her relations in the assertion of every right with which custom has invested her. With regard to liberty, such a lady can always go to the public bath; and not only that, but she visits for one or two days, as she chooses, at the house of her father, brother, sister, or son. She not only goes to all these places unattended, but her husband's following her would be deemed an unpardonable intrusion. Then she has visi-

tors at home, friends, musicians, dancers, and the husband cannot enter the lady's part of the house without giving notice. The moment his foot passes the threshold, every thing reminds him that he is no longer lord and master; children, servants, and slaves look alone to the lady. In short, she is paramount; when she is in good-humour every thing goes on well, and when in bad, nothing goes right.

We have seen what a native Persian says respecting the power and liberty of his country-women; and it is quite clear that, whilst Europeans generally think them treated in the most barbarous and monstrous manner, with regard to their liberty and rank in society, the Persians themselves look upon their women as virtually invested with more power and liberty, and greater privileges, than the women of Europe. But every nation has self-complacency and vanity enough to plume itself on its own exclusive advantages, and, in the same spirit of self-approbation, there is

hardly an individual who would change, in all respects of mind, body, and pursuit, with his equally self-approving neighbour. Every one has something about him, some valuable propensity or quality, not to be compared with any other that could be offered in exchange. Thus it is, happily, with the Persian women. They admit of no comparison with the women of other countries, who boast of their freedom; and their habits of mixing in society without constraint, and unveiled. Their defence in these matters is not only put forth by themselves, but even the men advocate their rights, and descant pretty largely on their prescriptive privileges. Among the most zealous in their cause is Mírza Abú Taleb Khán, who visited England many years ago, and, after a good deal of experience, imagined himself fully qualified to appreciate the merits of the question under consideration. He ranks under *eight* heads what his countrywomen enjoy *more* than European wives, both by law and custom. The *fifth*

head runs thus:—" ' The greater deference the Asiatic ladies find paid to their humours, and *a prescriptive right of teasing their husbands by every pretext*,'—which is considered," adds the Mírza, " as constituting an essential quality of beauty; for if a wife does not put these in practice, but is submissive to her husband's will in every thing, her charms very soon lose their force and brilliancy in his eyes. Thus, when a wife goes to visit her father, she will not return to her husband till he has come himself several times to fetch her, and being as often vexed by her breaking her promise. I have known of many beautiful women," says the Mírza, " constant in their affection, and obedient to their husbands night and day, whom, for not having these qualities, the husbands have quickly deserted, for the sake of plain women who possessed them!"

Under the *sixth* head the Mírza ranks, " ' the greater reliance placed by Asiatic husbands on their wives' virtue, both from law and custom.' For as to the European

ladies, although they can go out of doors and discourse with strangers, yet sleeping out all night is absolutely denied them—contrary to the way of the Asiatic ladies, who, when they go to the house of a lady of their acquaintance, though their husbands be entire strangers, are not attended by any person of the husband's or father's, and they spend not only one or two nights in that house, but even a whole week; and in such a house, although the master is prohibited entering the apartments where they are, yet the young men of fifteen, belonging to the family or relations, under the name of children, have free access, and eat with and enter into the amusements of their guests."

The influence of woman, indeed, may be said to be universal, and is probably admitted, whether in sadness or good-humour, by every one. *Pír Mohammed the Moralist*, says jocularly—

In every country—whether hot or cold—
That gentle wight called *Jerry Sneak* is found;
From king to peasant, cowardly or bold,
All bend when woman gains the 'vantage ground.
It matters not, if juvenile or old,
Sultans are sometimes Jerries, they abound
In India, kind, accommodating fellows,
Almost afraid to frown, or shew they're jealous.

Reader, art thou a *Jerry?* Few confess;
But if it be to live in peace and quiet;
To be exempt from all uneasiness
About domestic matters, drink and diet;
All household family cares; thou mayst express
Unbounded thanks to heaven for such a fiat;
Most women rule their husbands, and they know it;
The only difference is, some never shew it.

Yes, white and black acknowledge woman's sway,
So much the wiser, and the better too;
Deeming it most convenient to obey,
Or possibly they might their folly rue.
And always seeming at their ease, and gay,
For common to all climates, in a shrew;
There's nothing like a husband kept in trim,
Else he gets tired of her, and she of him.

But, seriously, this little book contains some highly characteristic points of do-

mestic arrangement in a Persian family, and has not only novelty to boast of, but it is mainly valuable on account of its coming from the fountain-head, and offering, as it does, another proof, added to thousands, that human nature is everywhere the same, and only modified, when it is modified, by external circumstances.

London,
October, 1832.

PROËM.

THROUGH whom came knowledge, and the powers of mind?
Through whom but Eve, the mother of mankind!
And, though her sons have shone from age to age,
Blazoning with glory History's ample page,
In arms, in wisdom, and in arts renowned,
Yet has superior skill her daughters crowned;
Still they, pre-eminent, their sway retain
O'er life's home-joys, and learning's rich domain.
Still they preserve with undiminished pride,
Their ruling influence, either sex to guide;
And hence, our own best interests to befriend,
On woman's nobler genius we depend.
Hence social maxims flow with better grace
From those endowed with charms of form and face;
From ruby lips, with pearls divinely set,
From eyes of languid softness, dark as jet;
And hence domestic precepts, rules, and laws,
Pronounced by beauty, must command applause.
Here Persia's matrons, skilled in worldly lore,
Assert the power their mothers held of yore:
In council deep, grave matters they debate,
And household cares, and mysteries too, relate;

Proudly in solemn conclave they unfold
By what nice conduct husbands are controlled;
Tell of the spells which check connubial strife,
And all the vagaries of a woman's life.
These moral laws the sex's homage claim,
And shed renown on *Kulsúm Naneh's* name.

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CUSTOMS AND MANNERS

OF THE

WOMEN OF PERSIA.

INTRODUCTION.

This learned treatise was not written for the use of the lords of creation, but for the instruction and edification of the female sex; should any woman, therefore, remain in doubt as to the true mode of proceeding in household matters, she has only to refer to the grave expounders of those laws and observances, which are deemed so highly important and necessary among women who aspire to conduct themselves with propriety, prudence, and decorum. These expounders of the laws are five accomplished females, peculiarly qualified by study, and a complete knowledge of the pursuits and habits of the sex, to settle every point of dif-

ficulty or embarrassment that may occur in the course of domestic life. Their names are

Kulsúm Naneh, the senior matron,
Shahr-Bánú Dadeh,
Dadeh-Bazm Arú,
Bájí Yásmin, and
Khála Gul-barí.

And there are two other functionaries, named Khála Ján Aghá and Bíbí Ján Afróz, who deliver their opinions with equal confidence, and who support or question the judgment of the other five on points of great importance, which naturally require the most careful consideration.

It is proper to remark that there are four degrees of obligation specified in this work, *viz. wájib*, necessary, expedient; *mustahab*, desirable; *sunnat*, according to the law and traditions of Mohammed; and *sunnat mu'akkad*, imperative or absolutely necessary.

CHAPTER I.

Of those Laws which are deemed imperative.

I.

It is highly essential to urge that the institutions and ordinances described and explained in the following pages, under the authority and sanction of matrons of deep learning, equally versed in the mystery of averting misfortune, and the means of making mankind subservient to the will of the softer sex, should be most strictly attended to and enforced in every respect. Human life and human affairs only hang by a thread, success or failure depends on the nicest movement, and, therefore, to avoid the approach and pressure of calamity, no ceremony or prescribed observance ought to be, under any circumstances, omitted :

For what is life? a breath, a vapour,
A bubble, a still wasting taper;
Now scarcely seen, now dull—now bright,
And now it sheds a quivering light,
Then quickly fades away in night.

Above all, the heavenly bodies, the sun and moon,

and stars, must be invariably consulted on every important occasion.*

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* A journey cannot be commenced, nor a new dress put on by the Persians, without reference to the astrologer; like the Romans they have all their *dies fasti atque nefasti*, their lucky and unlucky days. Their talismans are generally sentences from the Korán fixed on, under particular situations of the moon and stars, on different parts of the body.

Their universal dependence on astrological interpretations is well illustrated by the following amusing fact, related in Malcolm's History of Persia.

"Some years ago, when a Persian ambassador was about to proceed to India, he was informed by his astrologer of a most fortunate conjunction of the stars, which, if missed, was not likely to occur again for some months. He instantly determined that, though he could not embark, as the ship was not ready which was to carry him, to move from his house in the town of Abusheher to his tents, which were pitched at a village five miles off to receive him. It was however discovered by the astronomer, that he could neither go out of the door of his own dwelling, nor by the gate of the fort, as an invisible but baneful constellation was exactly opposite, and shed dangerous influence in that direction. To remedy this a large aperture was made in the wall of his house, but that only opened into his neighbour's; and four or five more walls were to be cut through before the ambassador and his friends (which included the principal men who were to accompany him) could reach the street. They then went to the beach, where it was intended to take a boat, and proceed two miles by sea, in order that their backs might be turned on the dreaded constellation; but the sea was rough, and the party hesitated encountering

a real

II.

Days appointed or set apart for rejoicing and mirth ought always to be celebrated accordingly. On the Ede festival old Bábá Sujá-ud-dín, three score and ten, snapped his fingers and played on the dyra, and began dancing merrily; and this is stated by the seven learned women to have been quite orthodox, and according to law. And it is also proper that all sects, and men of every creed, should do the same thing on the same joyous occasion. On that day, too, every hammám must be decorated with roses and other sweet flowers, and the people entertained with music and dancing at the expense of the keeper of the bath; the full and free expression of gladness in times devoted to hilarity being a great consolation to the heart, and ought never to be omitted.

III.

Whenever a person pays the debt of nature on a Wednesday, and on the following Wednesday another person of the same house dies, it is necessary to put one of the dead man's shoes into the

---

a real danger in order to avoid an imaginary one. In this dilemma the governor was solicited to allow a part of the wall of the town to be thrown down, that a mission on which so much depended might not be exposed to misfortune. The request, extraordinary as it may appear, was complied with, and the cavalcade marched over the breach to their tents."

grave with him, to check the mortality which might without that precaution continue in the family. When one of the shoes of the deceased cannot be found, Bájí Yásmin and Shahr Bánú Dadeh concur in the old saying:

If you cannot find a shoe,
Take an egg, and that will do.

IV.

Among other customs known to be of great efficacy and power is the following: On the last Friday of the blessed month of Ramazán the women ought to dress superbly and perfume themselves, and put on their best ornaments, and go to the porticos of the mosques, because young men of cypress forms, with tulip cheeks and amorous demeanour, assemble there in greater numbers than at other places. There they must sit down, and stretch out their feet, and every one must light twelve tapers, and in doing this care must be taken to lift the hand high above the head, so as to raise up the veil, as if by accident, and thus display their beautiful faces. Their crimson-tinted toes must also be exposed, in order that the young men may see and admire them with wounded hearts. But it would be an unlucky omen if one of the tapers was left unlighted. Bíbí Ján Aghá and the rest of the learned conclave are unanimous in this opinion. Further, it

is not at all necessary that in lighting the tapers silence should be observed: on the contrary, lovely women should always let their sweet voices be heard;

For there is nothing in the world more pleasing,
Than hearing strains of melting melody
From lips that shame the ruby.

And on that day, the last Friday of Ramazán, prayer should be twice performed (kneeling), to secure the speedy accomplishment of their wishes and desires. Kulsúm Naneh and her colleagues agree that the efficacy of these observances is much increased when attended to in those mosques which are mostly frequented by the poor and afflicted; for

Wherever the wretched assemble in prayer,
Most surely the blessing of heaven will be there.

V.

Should a favourable opportunity occur for the beautiful young girls to remain with the young men for a short time, and especially if their intercourse arises from mutual affection, there can be nothing wrong in the indulgence of their attachments. Indeed it is a fortunate circumstance, and, upon the whole, more satisfactory and gratifying to them than fasting the whole year. And whenever the young women visit their female friends on that blessed day, for the purpose of

meeting their lovers, they may be permitted, without any violation of decorum, to remain till a late hour. For every female ought to be her own master on that occasion; and if her husband presumes to ask where she has been, and why returned so late, it is highly reprehensible on his part, for through the sacred influence of that blessed day she stands acquitted of all impropriety.

VI.

Dadeh Bazm Arâ, Bâjí Yásmin, and Shahr-Bánú Dadeh are of opinion that when a woman applies the end of a taper to the tips of the toes of her right foot, and at the time of lighting it displays the beautiful shape of her leg, she will undoubtedly be in no danger of hell-fire. And Kulsúm Nâneh, the senior of the learned conclave, is decidedly of opinion that no woman can entertain the least hope of heaven whose husband forbids the things that are herein commanded, and considered proper for her pleasure and happiness in this world. For with what comfort can a woman remain in the house of her husband, who is continually opposed to those recreations to which her whole soul is devoted? Dadeh-Bazm Arâ says, I have proved, from the instructions of my master Iblís, that the man who does not allow his wife to visit holy places and mosques, and the houses of her friends, male and female, with whom

interviews may have been concerted, and who prohibits other innocent and agreeable proceedings, such as we have deemed proper and expedient for her own satisfaction and comfort,—that man, I say, will be condemned hereafter to severe and merited punishment. And in such case it is wájib that the relations of the wife should carry the husband before the Kází and claim a divorce, or deed of separation, to the end that the wife may be released from her misery, and be furnished with a separate maintenance.* If the husband should refuse to be divorced, and the wife die of a broken heart, he and his relations are deservedly liable to pay the expiatory mulct, as in cases of murder.

VII.

The following are also among the number of necessary observances. If a funeral passes by the

* Divorces, says Sir John Malcolm, are never on account of adultery, as that crime, if proved, subjects a woman who has been legally married to capital punishment! The general causes are complaints of badness of temper, or extravagance, on the part of the husbands; and of neglect, or cruel usage, on that of their wives. If the husband sues for a divorce, he is compelled to pay his wife's dower; but if she sues for it, her claim to that is cancelled. The consequence is, that it is not unfrequent, among the lower orders, when a man desires to be rid of his partner, to use her so ill, that she is forced to institute a suit for separation; and that, if granted, abrogates all her claims upon her husband.

door of a man afflicted with any disease, let the hands and feet of the sick be immediately bound in henna and washed, and let the water be afterwards sprinkled behind the bier. Then raising up the patient, cause him to move forward seven steps, and his sufferings will be relieved.

VIII.

Khála Ján Aghá says, that when a cock crows in the house unseasonably it must be killed, according to the old rhyme:

If a cock crows untimely, the wise-ones have said,
We should always be careful to wring off his head.*

IX.

The custom of women going to public places where prayers are read,† and where they may hear the news of the day, has already been adverted to. If a woman with child happens to be delivered

* In the north of England there is a similar superstitious notion, only the hen is the sufferer: if a hen happens to crow like a cock, it is immediately killed.

† In Sir John Malcolm's History of Persia, he says, women are not allowed to join in public prayer at the mosques; and the learned Sale, the translator of the Korán, observes, on the authority of a Mohammedan doctor of eminence, that the Moslems were of opinion, that the presence of females inspired a different kind of devotion from that which was required in a place dedicated to the worship of God. They are therefore directed to offer up their prayers at home, or, if they attend the place of public worship, it must be at a period when the male sex are not there

at the foot of the pulpit, her good fortune is incalculable. If she brings forth a son his name should be Ishwar, that he may be among the blessed in heaven. If a girl, she should be named Bíbí Khánam Ján Aghá, and at the last day she will have authority to intercede for forty souls. It is again urged that moon-faced beauties are entitled to go where young men assemble, and whatever husband prevents his wife so doing, will be sure to have the seven learned women his enemies at the day of resurrection.

X.

A woman should never on any occasion neglect to shew her predilection for rich apparel* and scenes of gaiety. For, as Gholám Nabí the poet says:

Soft speech, and languid looks, and gay attire,
Beauty improve, and joyous thoughts inspire:
Perfum'd with musk, in silk and gems arrayed,
Resistless are the charms of wife or maid;
Since richly dress'd, with smiles that ever please,
A lovely woman wins the heart with ease.

XI.

Another custom well deserving of particular attention is that of sitting down at the junction of

* So also thought the Wife of Bath:

The wasting moth ne'er spoiled my best array;
The cause was this, I wore it every day.

four cross-roads on a Wednesday night, and applying every sentence spoken by the passers-by to yourself, and considering it as a good or bad omen. There are several other ways in which a woman may obtain the knowledge of future good fortune. Take the Korán, and in the middle of the night, in the dark, open the volume, and lay the chamber-door key upon the leaves to mark the place. At day-break make two prostrations in prayer, and the words upon which the handle of the key is found will be prophetic of her destiny. Take also a mirror, and some sweetmeats arranged in a circle, and place a lock upon the mirror within the ring; then beckon to every person who passes along the road, and let each take the key in his or her possession, and try to turn back the lock. If the person who succeeds in opening the lock happens to be an agreeable and handsome youth, the wishes of her heart, of whatever kind, will be quickly accomplished; but should the opener of the lock be ill-favoured, ugly, and deformed, her happiness will be blighted for ever. And there is another custom which requires most scrupulous attention in the observance. When a woman is seized with night-fever, and she is attacked by the same complaint every twenty-four hours, a person should go to the top of

the house in the dark, and call out with a loud voice for succour,

" Ye, who have the power to calm
The fever's rage with healing balm,
In pity come, assistance give,
And bid a dying daughter live."

This invocation, or call, may be repeated three times. If the first time does not succeed, nor the second, then the third must be tried. A case is mentioned of a moon-faced damsel being seized with night-fever: her mother called out for her—no answer was given,—and she died.

CHAPTER II.

*Of Rules concerning the Bath.**

I.

In going to the hammám it is considered absolutely requisite that the woman, the moment she reaches the first door of the hot-rooms, should crack a few walnuts with the heel of her shoe, and

* The baths in Persia generally consist of two large apartments, one of which is appropriated to undressing, and the other to the cistern containing water. In the former, stone seats covered with rich carpeting are placed along the walls for the accommodation of the bathers. There is usually a long passage between this apartment and the bath, which latter is supplied with small benches, raised a little from the ground, upon which the bather performs his preparatory devotions.

The bather having undressed in the outer room, and retaining nothing about him but a piece of loose cloth round his waist, is conducted by the proper attendant into the hall of the bath; a large white sheet is then spread on the floor, on which the bather extends himself. The attendant brings from the cistern, which is warmed from the boiler below, a succession of pails full of water, which he continues to pour over the bather till he is well drenched and heated. The attendant then takes his employer's head upon his knees,

then walk with naked feet into the bath: this is wájib. She must then, with great care, sit

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and rubs in with all his might, a sort of wet paste of henna plant, into the mustachios and beard. In a few minutes this *pomade* dyes them a bright red; again he has recourse to the little pail, and showers upon his quiescent patient another torrent of warm water; then putting on a glove made of soft hair, yet possessing some of the scrubbing-brush qualities, he first takes the limbs and then the body, rubbing them hard for three quarters of an hour. A third splashing from the pail prepares the operation of the pumice-stone, this he applies to the soles of the feet. The next process scburs the hair of the face, whence the henna is cleansed away, and is replaced by another paste called rang, composed of the leaves of the indigo plant. To this succeeds the shampooing, which is done by pinching, pulling, and rubbing, with so much force and pressure, as to produce a violent glow over the whole frame. Some of the natives delight in having every joint in their bodies strained till they crack, and this part of the operation is brought to such perfection, that the very vertebræ of the back are made to ring a peal in rapid succession. This over, the shampooed body, reduced again to its prostrate state, is rubbed all over with a preparation of soap confined in a bag, till he is one mass of lather. The soap is then washed off with warm water, when a complete ablution succeeds, by his being led to the cistern and plunged in. He passes five or six minutes, enjoying the perfectly pure element, and then emerging has a large, dry, warm sheet thrown over him in which he makes his escape back to the dressing-room. During the process of the bath, many of the Persians dye not only their hair black, but their nails, feet, and hands, a bright red. They often smoke half a dozen kalyouns, and in short take the whole business more easily than

down in a basin in which various aromatic ingredients are mingled. Others say, if the shell of the walnut which the woman cracks on reaching the first door of the bath is burnt to smoke under the teeth of a person who has the tooth-ache, the pain will cease. Let the mother be fed with nourishing diet, and frequently with sugar and aniseed, which will make her milk abundant, and give strength to the child; a little cinnamon added to her food will also have a good effect. And when she comes out of the bath she must eat some yolks

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a European would his sitting down under the hands of a barber to shave his beard. The process with women is nearly the same. The same bath is used by both sexes, but at different periods, sometimes on alternate days, and at other times on alternate weeks.

The Persian ladies regard the bath as the place of their greatest amusement; they make appointments to meet there, and often pass seven or eight hours together in the carpeted saloon, telling stories, relating anecdotes, eating sweetmeats, sharing their kalyouns, and embellishing their beautiful forms with all the fancied perfections of the East, dyeing their hair and eyebrows, and curiously staining their fair bodies with a variety of fantastic devices, not unfrequently with the figures of trees, birds, and beasts, sun, moon, and stars. This sort of pencil-work spreads over the bosom, and continues down as low as the navel, round which some radiated figure is generally painted. All this is displayed by the style of their dress, every garment of which, even to the light gauze chemise, being open from the neck to that point; a singular taste and certainly more barbarous than becoming.—See Porter's Travels in Persia.

of eggs, and seeds, and *hul*, and *faufal*, a species of Indian nut, mixed together, and the women who accompany her must partake of the same dish: this, according to Kulsúm Naneh, is wájib ; the others pronounce it sunnat. Shahr Bánú Dadeh says, one of the candles used at the nuptial feast ought to be taken into the bath and lighted there, that the life of the child may be passed in splendour. And farther, as long as the woman gives milk, whatever she sees and wishes for must be presented to her, that her milk may not be disturbed by unpleasant emotions, which would be injurious to the health and temper of the child.

II.

There are many things which must be specially observed in visiting the hammám. The woman must enter the bath with only her cincture on, and when the kísa* and soap are used, it may be taken off. It is wájib to wash the head three times with soap ; and respecting the application of the núra,† it is improper for any young girl to

* The kísa is a kind of small sack made of goats' hair, which they put upon their hands and use in the manner of a flesh-brush. A cloth bag to fit the hand, roughly stitched all over, is commonly used in India for the same purpose.

† In eastern countries the hair under the arms, &c. is always removed. Núra is quick lime, or a composition made of it with arsenic, for taking out hairs by the roots.

use that depilatory. When women wish to use the núra, they must request a female friend to rub it on; it is quite wrong to apply it with your own hands. It is wájib for them to sit in a circle, and apply the núra to each other reciprocally, conversing good-humouredly all the while. This is generally a mirthful meeting, and all kinds of tittle-tattle considered perfectly wájib. It is also wájib to take kalyúns into the bath to smoke; and previous to visiting the bath, every woman of spirit and liberality orders her servants to get ready a delicious collation to be taken there, such as lettuce and vinegar, every sort of roast and boiled, and all the fruits in season, with sherbet and scented water.* This is wájib: and the women must sit down together and partake of the collation, and laugh and talk with all the hilarity and cheerfulness of youthful hearts. Others say that when women come out of the bath they ought to dress in gay apparel, and if they have any engagement, they must first proceed to the house of their friend or lover. And if they meet a handsome young man on their way, they must cunningly re-

* Tavernier says the Persian women pass their time in taking tobacco in different forms, and when in the bath, they are richly attired, and have delicious collations. They make their attendants shampoo their arms, legs, and thighs, till they go off to sleep, and thus lead most voluptuous lives.

move a little of the veil which covers their face, and draw it off gradually, pretending "It is very hot, how I perspire; my heart is wounded:" and talk in this manner, and stand a little, till the youth smells the perfume of ottar, and he looks captivated, and sends a message describing the enchanted and bewildered state of his mind.

III.

Again, it is wrong in men, when they see a woman come out of the bath or any private retreat, to ask her where she has been. Shahr Bánú Dadeh says, there are three sorts of men: 1. A proper man; 2. Half a man; 3. A Hupul-hupla. A proper man at once supplies whatever necessaries or indulgences his wife may require; he never presumes to go out without his wife's permission, or do any thing contrary to her wish. Your half man, of the second class, is a very poor snivelling wretch, always meddling, with but little furniture in his house, and just bread and salt enough for bare subsistence, never on any occasion enjoying the least degree of comfort. The wife sits in his house and works, and all she earns is applied to procure food and lights. It is therefore wájib in that industrious woman to reply harshly to whatever he says; and if he beats her, it is wájib for her to bite and scratch him, and pull his beard, and do every thing in her power to annoy him. If his severity

exceeds all bounds, let her petition the Kází and get a divorce. The third class, or Hupul-hupla, has nothing, no friends. He wants to dress and live luxuriously, but is totally destitute of means. If the wife of such a man absents herself from his house even for ten days and ten nights, he must not on her return ask her where she has been; and if he sees a stranger in the house, he must not ask who it is, or what he wants. Whenever he comes home and finds the street door shut, he must not knock, but retire, and not presume to enter till he sees it thrown open. Should he act contrary to this, the wife must immediately demand a divorce. Kulsúm Naneh says, that if such a husband should afterwards even beg to be pardoned and allowed to resume his former domestic habits, it would be wrong in the wife to remain a single day longer under his roof.

CHAPTER III.

Concerning Prayers and Fast-days.

I.

With respect to prayers and fasts, and sacred ablutions, and purifications, among women, they may be dispensed with under certain circumstances of inconvenience or indisposition.* On some occasions, indeed, they are improper. There are seasons for prayer, and seasons for bathing, these practices not being always consistent with each other. If prayers are much desired, ablution may be omitted, or left to the imagination; but in that case they are said to be of no avail.

* Hammâms like most things have substitutes, and a slight application of water will often answer the purpose of religious purification. Tavernier says: "before Persians pray, they are always obliged to bathe or wash themselves, and in every house they have a reservoir of water, which is often stagnant, dirty, and full of worms, as in many places water is not easily procured. They plunge the head into the water, wash the mouth, and rub the face, which is considered a sufficient purification."

Of the two, it is best to dispense with prayer. Shahr Bánú Dadeh and Kháli Ján Aghá say that until seven days have elapsed, prayer is improper. Kulsúm Naneh says ten days, but never more than ten. When females are engaged with their friends in pleasant conversation, and in the mutual communication of secrets, and this happens at the time of prayer, it is not required that they should cease their agreeable intercourse on that account; prayers may be dispensed with. Kulsúm Naneh says that when resting from a promenade in the garden, or other amusements, prayer may be indulged in without any evil ensuing. Kulsúm Naneh asked Shahr Bánú Dadeh to explain why, on hearing the sound of the drum and other instruments, prayer should be thought improper? Shahr Bánú replied, "Is it not well established in law, that when two commands are considered wájib the one least liked is dispensed with, every true woman being allowed to follow the one most suitable to her fancy, and most soothing to her heart? Therefore, hearing the lively sound of the drum, the delightful tones of musical instruments, and discussing secrets with your dear friends, need not be interrupted by a less congenial mode of employing your leisure." Another of the conclave said: "If a woman wishes to go to the bath, and has a slave girl in the house, she must on no account leave

her alone, because the husband might come home in the mean time and make love to her." This is one among a great number of things to be specially observed by a wife. The slave girl must not be left in the house, and the wife must abandon the thought of going to the bath. That is wájib. Again, when a woman is lame, and her bathing linen in a poor condition, the bath may be dispensed with, because it is permitted, before God, that the infirm shall be excused, and the law not enforced. She need not go to the bath, for until her lameness is cured, and her linen is renewed, ablutions and prayer are not wájib; in fact they would be injurious both to mind and body. And also, so long as the husband will not allow his wife the fees for the bath, and she is thus prevented from performing her ablutions, so long will fasting and prayer be of no use, even were his opposition to last for years. Kulsúm Naneh says, when a woman has not been to the bath for a considerable period, she ought to take whatever there is in the house of her husband to pay the expenses of the bath. And it is wájib that she should scold and fight with her husband, at least once or twice a day, till she obtains from him the amount required. And since there is no constancy in the disposition, nor certainty in the life of a husband, who may repudiate his wife from caprice, or chance to die suddenly,

it is necessary and wájib, whilst she does remain in his house, to scrape together, by little and little, all in her power, that when the hour of separation arrives she may be able to dress elegantly, and enjoy herself, until (if alive) he repents and becomes obedient to her will. Whilst a bride enjoys the pleasures of life, and the passing hour is marked by all that can delight and enchant her senses, it is not necessary that she should embarrass herself with fasts and prayers; these, under such circumstances, are superfluous things. But it is still wájib for the husband to be assiduous in prayer and thanksgivings for benefits received. And moreover, when his wife goes on a visit to the houses of her female friends or relations, it is incumbent on him to follow her with every thing he may have it in his power to provide to please her taste or fancy. This too is wájib. Further, when a woman is in the bath, and is amusing herself with her friends in cheerful conversation, or when she is listening to the fond protestations of a lover, and has not leisure for more serious calls on her thoughts, prayer is not required; nor is it necessary, when women have guests, or are guests, nor when they go to see a bride, nor when a husband goes on a journey, or arrives from a journey. But should a woman, whilst engaged in prayer, happen to discover her

husband speaking to a strange damsel, it is wájib for her to pause and listen attentively to what passes between them, and if necessary, to put an end to their conversation.

II.

The most remarkable fasts pronounced by the conclave wájib and sunnat, are those of Bíbí Húr and Bíbí Núr.* On those days the women wear

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* And who were Bíbí Húr and Bíbí Núr? Who, but holy women, martyrs, and saints! One of the many traditions relative to these venerated personages, describes the latter, Bíbí Núr, as a woman of great heroism, but originally the wife of a camel-keeper. She had from her infancy a proud spirit, and always looked up to a higher station than that in which fortune had first placed her. Her union with the camel-keeper hardly raised her one step: but he was a sordid wretch, and contributed nothing to her happiness; in consequence, she solicited and obtained a divorce. At that time war was raging between Medina and Syria, and fond of warlike pursuits, she had the resolution to dress herself in male attire, for the purpose of fighting in the cause of Hussen and Hussain. She is said to have performed prodigies of valour in their defence, and when Hussen was delivered into the hands of his enemies, and poison was administered to him, she indignantly put to death the wretch who had mixed the deleterious drug in his drink. Bíbí Núr was also in the field of Kerbelá, and was foremost in repulsing the enemy, and driving the Syrian legions marshalled against Hussain, across the Euphrates. She was present when Hussain was betrayed into the hands of the enemy, and when, expecting the

their best ornaments and go abroad, and consider it peculiarly gratifying to walk amidst young

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the fatal blow, he begged to be allowed time to offer up his prayers to heaven. She was also present when, in the midst of those prayers, the cruel axe severed his head from his body, without the means of being revenged on the executioner, and saw the blessed head afterwards displayed on the point of a spear. She then, with a deep design, assumed the attire of one of the enemy's soldiers, and accompanied the head into Syria, and was witness to a thousand miracles which were wrought by it on the road. Still believed to be a Syrian, she was confidently trusted, and availing herself of the opportunities she had, determined upon at once rescuing the head of Hussain, and conveying it back to Kerbela to be buried there, with the sacred body of the Imám. Her plans were well laid, and with a few confederates she succeeded in her pious exertions, after undergoing infinite pain and fatigue in crossing the desert. Many miraculous circumstances occurred in her progress, On one occasion, whilst guarding the head in the night, she beheld it burst through its covering, rise up, and remain in mid-air, self-balanced, like the moon, luminous and full of splendour. It then made three circuits round the halting ground, and stopped, looked at Bíbí Núr full in the face, and thus addressed her, with a smile—"Thou art no Syrian soldier, but the friend of the Prophet. Thou art Bíbí Núr, and thy martyrdom is at hand." The head then became invisible.

That noble front, that comely mien,
Such as on earth is rarely seen,
Which speaks at once the Prophet's race,
So full of dignity and grace.

On

men with tulip cheeks and cypress forms, and they never fail to sit down wherever they are

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On another night, the tent in which the head was deposited seemed to be illuminated by ten thousand lamps, and suddenly an angelic form appeared. It was Mohammed, the Prophet himself, who stooped and kissed the pale face of Hussain, and turning to Bíbí Núr, presented to her his seal-ring as a token of his approbation. This seal-ring was possessed of singular powers, and could make the wearer invisible, and transport him to a remote distance in the shortest space of time. After the head of Hussain was buried, Bíbí Núr returned to her old habitation, where her former husband again claimed her, notwithstanding the divorce. His former violent conduct was still fresh in her memory, but she now relied on the seal-ring of the Prophet, and touching with it the camel-keeper's head, and hands, and feet, he was not only changed into a superior being, but his poor dwelling was converted into a splendid mansion. His temper, at the same moment, became gentle and complying, and he was wholly subservient to the will of his re-married wife. Bíbí Núr is further said to have been an example and a pattern to all wives, having shewn the most efficient method of domestic government ever known. But her career was drawing to a close, and the prophecy of Hussain was soon to be accomplished. Azíd, the Syrian despot, had now discovered that she was the person who had, in man's disguise, put to death the woman employed to poison Hussen, and had subsequently, in the assumed character of a Syrian, betrayed her trust, and carried off the forfeited head of the Imám. Her fate was therefore instantly decided on. A band of spies having been dispatched to get possession of her person, they forcibly entered

to be found. They usually take with them a little girl, under age, to sit by them. They bow their

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entered the tent of the camel-keeper, and after binding him to a post, escaped with their prize. They tied her, almost naked, on a camel, and so tight were the cords drawn that she had not power to move her limbs. Three days and three nights she was kept in this position, and on the fourth morning she was found dead. The loud screaming of the pinioned camel-keeper, her husband, was soon heard by his neighbours, who as soon as they were informed of the outrage that had been committed, set off in a body in pursuit of the robbers, but only came up with them when she had ceased to exist.

Some years after she had been buried, those gossips and friends, who knew and recognized her worth, assembled near her grave, to pay her departed spirit that respect to which she was entitled. A cloud of fragrance was seen to rise from the sod, and sparks of light seemed to issue from the ground upwards. The people, all enthusiasm on the occasion, supposed that the martyr was still alive, and immediately proceeded to open the grave. Removing the earth they found the body, breathless indeed, but blooming and fresh as in life, rich with the sweetest perfume, with the seal-ring of Mohammed glittering on her finger, from which had issued the sparks already mentioned. It was thus that her name of Bíbí Núr was confirmed, she being all light, all splendour, even in death. Ever after this Bíbí Núr was held sacred, and a fast ordained in her name.

Bíbí Húr, her sister, was more particularly distinguished for her conjugal perfections, and the authority she exercised at home over her gentle spouse. She too was a martyr, and is now a saint, having been slain by the Syrians with special cruelty, at the battle of Kerbela.

heads twice in prayer, and after that go on with the romantic story of Bíbí Húr and Bíbí Núr, and whilst they speak they keep their eyes on the little girl, who looks up and exclaims continually, "May God grant the fulfilment of your wishes!" till the story is concluded. Then they break their fast, and doubtless in that week, or that month, or that year, the special wish of the party will be accomplished, and a great many other advantages and benefits obtained.

III.

Kulsúm Náneh says, no woman who has a doubt or suspicion about these fasts can have derived any profit from her instructions. Another fast occurs on the 17th of the blessed month of Rajab. It is kept till mid-day. Then with water poured out of a new vessel, make some *halwá*,* and break your fast. Take off your veil when conversing in private with friends on your domestic concerns.

IV.

Another fast is sacred to Hizrat Amír-ul-Múminín, the peace of God be upon him, say the learned seven. When a woman keeps this fast, she must take up a *ghulbál* and a *kasab*, and beg at the door of seven houses, striking at the same time the ghulbál with the kasab to make a noise. Whatever

* A sort of sweet cake.

she obtains from the seven houses must be applied to the purchase of something to break her fast. On that day she must hold her peace, and speak to no one. It is lucky to do the menial service of the house, to cook, to bake bread, and sweep the floors; but in cooking no salt must be used. If she eats dates on that day, the effect will be propitious. Bájí Yásmin says, this fast should be kept on a Monday. Another fast is that of Hizrat Bíbí, whose radiant soul is now shining in heaven. On that occasion you must obtain something by begging from seven houses, and draw water from seven wells, cook with that water, and then break your fast. It is wájib to do this along with your friends and a beloved youth. Shahr Bánú Dadeh says, it is necessary to break your fast with water poured from a new vessel whilst it is cool. No one except yourself must drink from the same vessel, and after thus breaking your fast it is wájib to make two prostrations in prayer. The conclave unanimously agree that every wife and maid who has faith, and performs all the ceremonies required at this fast, will have her desires fully realized. If a girl's fortune has not been already told, and she keeps this fast, it will soon be developed: and if a woman unhusbanded keep this fast, she will soon be united to a spouse. Again, for telling the fortune of young damsels the following method is

pursued. The women take up a maiden and convey her to the top of a minar. They place on the first step a walnut, and on the second two walnuts, and then proceed to the top, where two prostrations in prayer are required. In descending, when she comes to the step where the two walnuts are placed, she must sit down upon them, that by the weight of her body they may be cracked. After this, on returning home, she must not look back. Dadeh Bazm Ará, and Bíbí Ján Afróz, exclaim: "Well do we remember that, many a time and oft, a damsel has done this, as it were to-day, and the next her fortune has been abundantly indicated."

CHAPTER IV.

Of Singing and Instrumental Music, and of the Women of Shíráz, Georgia, Circassia, Isfahán, and Tabríz.

I.

AND now of music and singing, two favourite amusements among the women of Persia. A musical instrument of one kind or other should always be kept in the house, that neighbours, whilst visiting each other, may never be without the means of adding to the pleasure and sociability of their parties. If it so happen that neither a *dyra hulkadár** nor a *síkdár* is provided, the house ought at any rate to possess a brass dish and a mallet for that purpose. Every woman should be instructed in the art of playing upon the dyra, or tambourine, and she in turn must teach her daughters, that their time may be passed in joy and mirth; and the songs of Háfiz, above all others, must be remembered. It is also most agreeable and gratifying to have music whilst engaged at the banquet, and on

* The dyra hulka-dár is a large tambourine with rings.

all occasions of taking refreshments. No game or diversion has half its spirit when it is not accompanied by the thrilling sound of some sweet instrument. Even the pleasing exercise of the swing is rendered more delightful by the tinkling of a cymbal, or the dulcet notes of a kettle-drum.

II.

In the swing it is both mustaḥab and wájib for two persons to sit together, one passing a leg round the waist of the other. If one is a youth, and his companion a girl, so much the better. Kulsúm Naneh says, when they are thus sitting in the swing-rope, mutually embracing and vibrating to and fro, nothing can be more graceful and charming, and free from blame. Bájí Yásmin is of opinion that, whilst enjoying the swing, it is also wájib to repeat the following lines:

Swing, swing from the tree, see how quickly we go!
Now high as the branches, now sweeping below;
Does a rival presume to supplant me? O, no;
If he did, in a moment his life-blood should flow.
Now we cut through the wind, up and down is our flight,
My soul it drinks wine, and is wild with delight.
My heart's crimson current rolls only for thee,
Therefore be thou compassionate, sweet one, to me.

Swing, swing from the tree; swing, swing from the tree;
I am thine—thine for ever, then cling fast to me.*

III.

On the 13th of the month Saffar, and on a Wednesday, it is wájib to enjoy the exercise of the swing. Others say that whenever a person mounts the swing without the music of the dyra, it is like prayer without sincerity, and is of no use. Again, playing on the dyra and being joyful on six different occasions is wájib, *viz.* first, at the bridal-feast; secondly, whilst enjoying the luxury of the bath; thirdly, on the arrival of friends from a journey; fourthly, at hospitable entertainments; fifthly, at childbirth, when a son is born; and sixthly, whilst enjoying the swing. If these appointed times of rejoicing are neglected, and unattended with music, what hope is there of heaven?

* It may be noted here, once for all, that the learned seven give their sanction to no extra attachment in any man or woman but that which is purely platonic.

Platonic souls! how precious to each other!
Truly platonic, ask ye? Yes, why not?
She may love *him* as dearly as a brother,
And *he* love her, too, without stain or spot;
A married woman often claims another,
Besides her gentle spouse, her lawful lot.
'Tis all the same at Venice, or Aleppo,
You must have read Lord Byron's story, *Beppo*.

It is mustahab for every person who has any taste for pleasure and luxurious indulgence to play on the drum, the dyra, and other instruments. Every house that can boast of music is blessed, and blesses others;* and it is a great sin ever to be without the charm of harmonious sounds. Bájí Yásmin says, that when a person returns from a journey, even if his wife should be at the moment giving birth to a child, let not music be omitted; and wherever the musicians are at work, women must assemble and listen to them with delight. Kulsúm Naneh, Shahr-Bánú Dadeh, and others, insist that if a woman at prayers suddenly hears the sound of music, she ought to start up instantly and listen to the song of the minstrels. But Bájí Yásmin, Bíbí Ján Afróz, and Dadeh Bazm Ará, say, that if the woman at prayers is old and decrepid she may continue her devotions without listening to a single note: but whoever, possessing youth and beauty, hears sweet music and neglects to attend to it, continuing the occupation upon which he or she happens to be engaged, is guilty of improper conduct, and unworthy of either respect or consideration. And whenever a company of performers assemble, and their exhila-

* It is twice blessed;
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes.
Merchant of Venice.

rating music is heard, every one, far and near, must immediately run to the spot and listen to the last moment. If they fail to manifest this praiseworthy disposition, and shew themselves destitute of feeling and taste, they are not only to be pitied for their dullness and stupidity, but condemned for the neglect of an ancient custom.

IV.

The women of Shíráz may be properly imitated in this respect. They are remarkable for their taste in minstrelsy, and their devotion to the memory of Háfíz. Bájí Yásmin says, calling to mind the spot on which he was buried,—

Hail to the bard, whose picturings warm,
Derived from love-inspiring wine,
Through every heart diffuse a charm,
And prove the poet's powers divine!

Here jocund crowds were wont to meet,
And round his sacred ashes throng,
And quaffing wine would oft repeat
Mutribā Khúsh, his sweetest song.

Each maid an offering loved to pay
Upon her favourite poet's bier,
For still his sweetly melting lay
Breathes joy in every Persian ear.*

* The tomb of Háfíz stands about two miles out of the city. It is of white marble, eight feet long by four broad, and was built

V.

Shíráz is, indeed, a city very much celebrated for beautiful women, and equally remarkable for its gaiety and magnificence.

The lovely damsels of Shíráz,
Are skilled in Kulsúm Naneh's laws,
Adding to charms that wisdom blind,
The richer treasures of the mind.

Their glowing cheeks have tints that cast
A shadow o'er the rose's bloom;
Their eyes, by Laili's* unsurpassed,
Give splendour to the deepest gloom.

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built by Kerrím Khán, covering the original one of brick. The principal youth of the city, says Colonel Francklin, assemble here and shew every mark of respect for their favourite poet, making plentiful libations of the delicious wine of Shiráz to his memory.

* The story of Laili and Majnún is one of the most celebrated in the Persian language. "The tale itself is extremely simple, and the more affecting, because it is true; for Kais, who became frantic from disappointed love, and thence had the surname of Majnún, was a most accomplished and amiable youth, the only son of an Arabian chieftain in the first age of the Mohammedan empire: fragments of his beautiful poetry are still repeated with rapture by the Arabs of Hijáz, and the best works of the Persians abound in allusions to his unfortunate passion. Laili was the daughter of a neighbouring chief, and was also eminently accomplished: yet she had no transcendent beauty, it seems, in any eyes but those of her lover. Sa'dí, who

Black brows just like the bended bow,
O'erarch those stars of living light;
And mingling with each other, show
The glance of beauty still more bright.

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who represents her with a swarthy complexion and of low stature, tells a long, but agreeable story on the same subject, which the Maulaví of Rúm has comprized in two couplets: "The Khalífeh said to Laílí, art thou the damsel for whom the lost Majnún has become a wanderer in the desert? thou surpassest not other girls in beauty." She said, "Be silent, for thou art not Majnún."—*See the Works of Sir William Jones.*

It may be added here that the poplar, or cypress, is called *ázád dereákht*, or the *free tree*, because Majnún saved one from the axe of a gardener, on the plea of its resembling the shape of Laílí. Wandering amidst lonely groves in frantic mood, Majnún thus addressed the man who was about to commit the sacrilege:

"Gardener! did ever love thy heart control?
Was ever woman mistress of thy soul?
When joy has thrilled through every glowing nerve,
Hadst thou no wish that feeling to preserve?
Does not a woman's love delight, entrance,
And every blessing fortune yields enhance?
Then stop that lifted hand, the stroke suspend,
Spare, spare the cypress tree, if thou'rt my friend!
And why? look there, and be forewarn'd by me,
'Tis Laílí's form, all grace and majesty.
Would'st thou root up resemblance so complete,
And lay its branches withering at thy feet?
What, Laílí's form! no, spare the cypress tree,
Let it remain, still beautiful and free.
Yes, let my prayers thy kindliest feelings move,
And save the graceful shape of her I love."
—The gardener dropped his axe, o'ercome with shame,
And left the tree to bloom, and speak of Laílí's fame.

Their musky locks have each a spell,
Each hair itself ensnares the heart;
Their moles* are irresistible,
And rapture to the soul impart.

And what is better; wise and fair,
And more discreet than others are,
The lovely damsels of Shíráz
Are skilled in Kulsúm Naneh's laws!

But Georgia is a garden sweet,
And beauty's own romantic seat;
The dark-browed maidens there possess
The boon of perfect loveliness.
Stags' eyes in sleepy languor roll,
And captivate the softened soul;
Long silken lashes shade the ball,
And tresses o'er the shoulders fall
In many a heart-bewildering ring,
Glossy and black as raven's wing.
Their forms with fine proportion graced,
Full-bosomed, slender round the waist,
With tapering limbs of snowy whiteness,
Eclipsing even the moon in brightness.†

* The reader will here remember the beautiful ode of Háfíz in which this passage occurs, "I would give for the mole on her cheek the cities of Samarkand and Bokhara."

† The old traveller, Sir John Chardin, says, "the complexion of the Georgians is the most beautiful in all the east, and I can safely say that I never saw an ill-favoured countenance in

—Circassian damsels, too, display
Superior charms, and ever gay,
Chase sorrow from the heart away.
Though often they are bought and sold,
By mothers given for paltry gold;
Yet is not their's a slavish part,
Beauty still holds in chains the heart.*
And they, in princely hall or bower,
With wedded dames have equal power;
For they have never failed to look
In Kulsúm Naneh's matchless book,
And, studying there, obtained that blessing,
More than all others worth possessing.

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in all that country, either of the one or the other sex; but I have seen those that have had angels' faces, nature having bestowed upon the women of that country graces and features which are not other where to be seen, so that 'tis impossible to behold them," adds the ancient chronicler, "without falling in love. More charming countenances, nor more lovely statures and proportions cannot be pencilled forth by all the art of man. They are tall, clean-limbed, plump, and full, but not over fat, and extremely slender in the waist. Let them have never so few clothes on, you shall not see their hips. That which spoils all, is this, that they all paint, as well the lovely as less beautiful; for they make use of paint instead of other ornaments."

* Tavernier saw most beautiful women in Persia The *fair*, he says, were from Poland, Moscow, Circassia, Mingrelia, Georgia, and the frontiers of Great Tartary; the *tawny*, from the kingdom of the Great Mogul, Golconda, and Visapúr; and the *dark*, from the borders of the Red Sea.

Daughters of Persia! still is yours
The art to charm, while life endures;
But search Búshír to Khorassán,
There's none like those of Isfahán!
For wit and pleasantry, and loving,
Ever the joys of life improving.
But they are jealous, and make man
Know who's supreme at Isfahán!
Since they, upholding woman's cause,
Her rights, and Kulsúm Nanch's laws,
Have, heroine-like, the resolution
To put them well in execution.

What are the women of Tabríz?
Not beautiful, and yet they please.
Please? Yes, by heavens, and they command,
And always keep the upper-hand.
Their tempers, sharp as Damask sword,
Throw bitterness in every word;
Yet man, obsequious to their will,
Controlled, and unresisting still,
Bends patiently beneath their sway,
Anxious to live as best he may:
Thus, whether beautiful or plain,
Woman asserts her lordly reign,
Which proves her intellectual power—
For wisdom is the sex's dower!

CHAPTER V.

Of the Nuptial Night.

I.

It is necessary that the ceremonies and customs of the nuptial night should be well understood, lest any mistake arise prejudicial to the peace and future prospects of the parties concerned; for in every undertaking, whether mercantile, social, or connubial, the success of the initiatory process is generally considered prophetic of a prosperous career. This notion holds good especially in a Persian wedding. It is therefore declared by the learned conclave, that on the day the bride is escorted to the nuptial chamber, the husband is allowed to wait some time, with the women who accompanied her, in another room; but he is not allowed, on any account, to treat them familiarly, or toy with them. Kulsúm Naneh says, although it is wájib for the husband to remain with the bride-women, it is highly indecorous in him to indulge in any thing like flirtation, because such conduct would infallibly irritate the feelings of the wife.

It is also wájib for the mother of the bride to be present on the nuptial night. When the husband is introduced into the bridal-chamber, he is seated by her side. The right leg of the bride is placed upon the left leg of the husband, and her right hand is placed upon the hand of her husband, to shew that she ought always to have the upper hand of her spouse. It is wájib that the husband should then make two prostrations in prayer. A basin and ewer and water are now brought, and the right leg of the bride and the left leg of the bridegroom are placed together and washed, and their hands also in the same manner.* The husband then takes the bride in his arms and places her on the nuptial couch, and scatters cotton seed over her head.

II.

Fresh fish fried and mixed in the food of the bride and bridegroom on the nuptial night is of great advantage; and if it rains on that night the bridegroom will doubtless be prosperous.

* The Mussulmans in India do not observe exactly the same initiatory process. Placing the bride's and bridegoom's arms round each other's neck, with their faces turned towards the kibleh, they cause them to make two prostrations; after which the bride first washes the bridegroom's feet in a mixture of sandal and water, and then he washes her's. That being done, the couple retire.—*Qanoon-e-Islam.*

III.

It is sunnat for both to take aromatic seeds in their mouths, that they may be sweet to each other: and looking into a glass and the Korán, and particularly consulting the súra, or chapter of Joseph, is also sunnat. Some think it only wájib. Bíbí Ján Afróz says, that the seeds scattered over the head of the bride are useful in fortune-telling. The same virtue is communicated to the seeds tied up in the corner of the bride's handkerchief; and he who eats the seed found in the turban of the bridegroom will have every wish of his heart realized. Kulsúm Naneh says, that when the bride enters the nuptial chamber, music should be struck up from all kinds of instruments, the women making the air resound with

"Mubárak bád! Mubárak bád!
Auspicious may your fortunes be!
And ever may your hearts, still glad,
Respond to nuptial revelry;
Mubárak bád! Mubárak bád!"

IV.

Should there be no dyra hulkadár in the house, prayer in that house is of no avail. Shahr Bánú Dadeh says it is indispensable to have a dyra síkdár; but Bíbí Ján Afróz and the others contend, that if there is neither a dyra hulkadár nor síkdár, a dyra without a hulka or sík will be sufficient to

drive misfortune away. It is also wájib at the time of repeating the benediction, mubárak bád, that these verses by Shahr Bánú Dadeh should be sung:

This house is resplendent and joyous to-night,
The beautiful lamps give a dazzling light:
O this night! this night, it is fit to inspire
Every heart with the passion of love and desire.
May these joys never cease to entrance them, O never;
What a night! what a night! be it blessed and for ever.
Though the lamps are all burning, the guests are now gone,
And the bride and the bridegroom left happy alone.

V.

The whole conclave concur in approving of these congratulatory verses on the occasion, preceded and followed by loud strains of enlivening music. It is wájib that a handsome woman should throw the sleeping apparel of the bride,* that the husband may be constant and true to his wife; and it is lucky for both to sleep on one pillow. Special care must be taken that an ugly black woman does not throw the sleeping apparel, for according to Kulsúm Naneh, it would be highly injurious to the wedded pair. Others are of opinion, that

* Something like throwing the stocking in several parts of England.

after the bride and bridegroom have retired to the nuptial chamber, those women who attended the bride from her mother's house to that of her husband should sit in a corner and listen to all that is said, and in the morning tell the gossip to their friends and acquaintances.

VI.

Should there be no convenient opportunity for prayer on the nuptial night, the omission is not considered of any consequence. On the following day it is usual for the company to re-assemble, and play on the dyra, and dance. For the company to dance is wájib; for the bride, sunnat; though some think it only wájib. They also say that the bride's dinner ought to be cooked in her mother's house, behind a screen. And on the day of the marriage a little camphor and rose-water, with fried seeds, should be given to her, and doubtless her first child will be a son. This is not a recipe of questionable efficacy; it is established. And when the bride is taken to the house of her husband, it is absolutely necessary that every one related to the bride should carry along with her an offering of sweetmeats. A bride may dispense with prayers forty days; and if she is married in the blessed month of Ramazán, it is not necessary that she should either pray or fast at all during that period.

CHAPTER VI.

Of Pregnancy and Child-birth.

I.

THERE are several rules necessary to be attended to during the time of gestation, and the infancy of the child. When a woman becomes pregnant, she must communicate the circumstance to the relations of her husband, who will assemble together and make such arrangements for her comfort and convenience as to prevent every chance of accident.

II.

In that state, too, the woman should take a needle and thread, and sew into a piece of linen some grains, particularly of wheat and arzen, and a gold coin. These she must keep, and mark the effect. If one of the articles should be lost, that year will be unfortunate to the loser. Should, however, any untoward event occur, the child, at the time of birth, will be the greatest sufferer. Whatever the pregnant woman may long for, whether beef, or goat, or mutton, fruit, or

apparel, or wine, the husband must provide and bring to her; for if he does not furnish that which she may have set her heart upon, the child's eyes will be green: this is sunnat. And when the period of delivery is nigh, a proper nurse must be brought. On her arrival she places herself at the head of the woman in labour, and claps her hands three times: and if the birth is protracted, Kulsúm Naneh advises the child's binder to be thrown at her head to expedite delivery. Shahr Bánú Dadeh says, that the nurse, on any occasion of delay, ought to address the infant thus:

"O, thou sweet and gentle child!
Why this long delay?
Pure thou art, and undefiled—
Prithee come away.

Cherub! what hast thou to fear?
Love and joy await thee here,
Sweet! no longer stay.
The water is warm to bathe thee,
Thy raiment is ready to swathe thee,
Then why this long delay?

Thy mother's fair bosom is throbbing with pleasure,
Impatient to yield thee its balmy treasure;
And thy cradle is ready to rock thee to rest,
Come away, then, and let thy fond mother be blest.
Come away, come away!"

These are among the secrets and mysteries employed to induce a more speedy accouchement; and Khála Ján Aghá says, that no person of immoral conduct, no person habitually negligent of prayer, or in a state of impurity, should be present on such occasions. Another considers it prudent to draw the sword half way out of the scabbard, and wait awhile, otherwise fatal consequences may ensue. For *Al** may chance to supervene and lacerate the heart of the woman: caution, therefore, is of the greatest importance; and nothing even of the colour of al, which is scarlet, should be seen in the room; but it is of use to put a black handkerchief over the woman's head, and, tying a knot in it, contributes in a high degree to a favourable result.

III.

It is especially necessary that the woman should not drink water for three days.† If she dies of thirst she will be among the blessed in heaven. When the child is born wash him well, wrap him in swaddling clothes, and put him in a large dish or basin till the umbilical cord is cut. The ceremony observed

* *Al* in this place means a child-bed disease, the puerperal fever, to which the mother is said to be subject during the first seven days after delivery, and is generally fatal.

† In the south of India, the only drink permitted for forty days after confinement is water, in which a red-hot horse-shoe, or any other piece of iron, has been slaked, and allowed to cool.—*Qanoon-e-Islam.*

in performing this operation is as follows: The nurse takes up the sword, or knife, and makes a mark or sign upon the four sides of the room, successively repeating a prayer four times. Kulsúm Naneh says, if these marks are not drawn as prescribed, the apprehended disease will come on violently, and the woman undoubtedly die. Beware, therefore, of neglecting the injunctions of the learned seven, and of doing that which they have forbidden: and be sure never to use the word al, the very utterance of which is sometimes the forerunner of the disease. Kulsúm Naneh says, I have myself seen the apparition of al several times; it is like a girl of slender form, rosy complexion, and with hair like red tulips; on this account they call her Al, for al means scarlet.

Would you know Al? she seems a blushing maid,
With locks of flame, and cheeks all rosy red.

IV.

It is also wájib that three onions should be suspended from the woman's head, that Al may be frightened away by the smell. Let not an incautious person come near her. Bájí Yásmin says, leave not a woman alone during delivery, for if you do, fever may take possession of her heart. And on those occasions, when great pain ensues, it is necessary, for the purpose of alleviating the symptoms, to pour barley into her lap, and bring a

horse to eat it there: and for seven days she must be called Mariam, and her own name not mentioned, otherwise she will fall sick and be in danger.

Life is too sweet a boon,
Not to be kept with fondest care;
Neglect the lamp—and soon
It ceases to illume the air.

Cherish we must that flower,
Whose bud is opening to the day,
And stay the fatal hour
And brighten life's uncertain ray.

V.

Again, for six days the child must be kept by its mother's side, and not put into the cradle; during those days it is regarded as a dear friend returned from a long journey: the host is the mother. After that, it must be put into the cradle, near which and the mother they place some sweetmeats, and bread and cheese, and roasted fowl, and sherbet; that if any bad symptom appear she may employ herself in eating, and then nothing unpleasant will happen either to herself or to the child. In putting the infant into the cradle they tie a little bread and sweet cake in a handkerchief, and fasten it round the child, which they call *tosha*, or provisions for a journey.* And it is also wájib that seven women

* The Mohammedans of India do not place the infant in the cradle before the fortieth day.—*Qanoon-e-Islam*.

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should sit down together in a ring and hand the child about from one to another: the first who takes the child, in giving it to the other, should say, "Take it;" the other asks "What is it?" the giver says, "A child!" In this manner the infant is handed among the seven till it comes to the nurse, who, on receiving it back, exclaims in an affectionate tone, "God preserve thee, dear cherub!" and places it in the cradle: this is wájib. All the seven wise women agree in this, except Khála Gul-barí, who contends that it is not only wájib, but sunnat. Khála Ján Aghá is decidedly of opinion, that when the child is put into the cradle some walnuts ought to be cracked, and these words addressed to the infant to make him courageous:

Fear not croak of loathsome frog,
Nor the bark of wolf or dog,
Nor the crowing of a cock,
Nor the winter tempest's shock;
Fear not raven, nor sink under
Lightning's flash or deafening thunder;
Fear not screeching owl or rat,
Snake or scorpion, fowl or bat.

VI.

Dadeh Bazm Arú says, that during the time the mother suckles her child no person ought to ruffle her feelings in any way, lest her milk should be soured; in short, she must not be questioned or contradicted, but kept in as perfect a state of

tranquillity in body and mind as possible: this is peculiarly wájib.

VII.

Another usage. When the time of parturition is nigh, it is proper to spread the table-cloth and place a lamp at each of the four corners of the table, to burn night and day; and to place upon the table fruits of seven sorts, and seven kinds of aromatic seeds. Kulsúm Naneh contends, that a pomegranate on the table takes away the good effects of the Ede, and therefore it is incumbent on every person in the house to eat every twelfth seed of that fruit, to destroy its power and prevent misfortune.

CHAPTER VII.

Of the Conduct of the Wife to her Husband, Mother-in-law, and to other Relations.

I.

THIS chapter embraces the conduct of husband to wife, and wife to husband. That man is to be praised who confines himself to one wife; for if he takes two it is wrong, and he will certainly repent of his folly. Thus say the seven wise women—

Be that man's life immersed in gloom
Who weds more wives than one,
With one his cheeks retain their bloom,
His voice a cheerful tone;
These speak his honest heart at rest,
And he and she are always blest;
But when with two he seeks for joy,
Together they his soul annoy;
With two no sun-beam of delight
Can make his day of misery bright.*

* The learned seven have here, as indeed on all occasions, meritoriously shewn a proper regard for strictly moral conduct, and the happiness of domestic life They very justly insist upon

II.

That man, too, must possess an excellent disposition, who never fails to comply with his wife's wishes, since the hearts of women are gentle and tender, and harshness to them would be cruel. If he be angry with her, so great is her sensibility, that she loses her health and becomes weak and delicate. A wife, indeed, is the mirror of her husband, and reflects his character; her joyous and agreeable looks being the best proofs of his temper and goodness of heart. She never of herself departs from the right path, and the

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upon it that a man ought not to be burthened with more than one wife at a time, being satisfied that the management of two is beyond his power, if not impossible. The same view of the case is entertained by *Widow Wali* in the old play of *The Sultan:*

> Wretch! wouldst thou have another wedded slave?
> Another! What, another! At thy peril
> Presume to try th'experiment; wouldst thou not
> For that unconscionable, foul desire,
> Be linked to misery? Sleepless nights, and days
> Of endless torment,—still recurring sorrow
> Would be thy lot. Two wives! O never, never.
> Thou hast not power to please two rival-queens,
> Their tempers would destroy thee; scar thy brain;
> Thou canst not, Sultan, manage more than one!
> Even one may be beyond thy government.

Hear the confession of Mirza Abu Taleb Khán himself! "From what I know," he says, "*it is easier to live with two tigresses than with two wives!*"

colour of her cheeks is like the full blown rose; but if her husband is continually angry with her, her colour fades, and her complexion becomes yellow as saffron. He should give her money without limit: God forbid that she should die of sorrow and disappointment! in which case her blood would be upon the head of her husband.

The parrot tears the rose with felon-beak,
As sorrow preys on beauty's tempting cheek;
The robber-worm destroys both fruit and flower,
As grief cuts shorter life's fast fleeting hour;
If thou wouldst live and love, and joy impart,
Vain fool! keep grief and sorrow from her heart.

III.

The learned conclave are unanimous in declaring that many instances have occurred of women dying from the barbarous cruelty of their husbands in this respect; and if the husband be even a day-labourer, and he does not give his wages to his wife, she will claim them on the day of judgment. It is incumbent on the husband to bestow on the wife a daily allowance in cash, and he must also allow her every expense of feasting, and of excursions, and the bath, and every other kind of recreation. If he has not generosity and pride enough to do this, he will assuredly be punished for all his sins and omissions on the day of resurrection. And whenever he goes to the market, he

must buy fruit and other little things, and put them in his handkerchief, and take them to his wife, to shew his affection for her, and to please her heart. And if she wishes to undertake a little journey, to go to the house of her friends for a month, to attend the baths, or enjoy any other pastime, it is not fit for the husband to deny those wishes, and distress her mind by refusal. And when she resolves upon giving an entertainment, it is wájib that he should anticipate what she wants, and bring to her all kinds of presents, and food, and wine, required on the festive occasion. And in entertaining her guests, and mixing among them, and doing all that hospitality and cordial friendship demand, she is not to be interrupted or interfered with by her husband saying "What have you done? where have you been?" And if her female guests choose to remain all night, they must be allowed to sleep in the woman's room, whilst the husband sleeps apart and alone. The learned conclave unanimously declare that the woman who possesses such a husband—a man so accommodating and obedient, is truly fortunate; but if he happens to be of an opposite character, morose, disobliging, and irritable, then indeed must she be the most wretched of womankind. In that case she must of necessity sue for a divorce, or make him faithfully promise future obedience and readiness to devote himself wholly

to her will and pleasure. If a divorce is denied, she must then pray devoutly to be unburthened of her husband, and that she may soon become a widow. By artifice and manœuvring the spouse may thus be at length induced to say : " Do, love, whatever you please, for I am your dutiful slave."* Bíbí Ján Afróz says, " a woman is like a nose-gay, always retaining its moisture so as never to wither." It is not, therefore, proper that such a lovely object should be refused the comfort and felicity of taking pleasant walks in gardens with her friends, and manifesting her hospitality to her guests; nor is it reasonable that she should be prevented from playing on the dyra, and frequently visiting her acquaintance.

'Tis perpetual Spring
When a woman is kind;
But her frowns always bring
Winter tempests to mind.

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* This is in the true spirit of the Wife of Bath.

But after many a hearty struggle past,
I condescended to be pleased at last;
Soon as he said, " My mistress and my wife,
Do what you list, the term of all your life;"
I took to heart the merits of the cause,
And stood content to rule by wholesome laws;
Received the reins of absolute command,
With all the government of house and land,
The empire o'er his tongue and o'er his hand.

IV.

Should her husband, however, maliciously and vexatiously refuse these rights, she cannot remain longer in his house. An old or ugly woman does not lie under the same obligation; she may submit to any privation without infringing the rules of decorum. The conclave also declare that the husband's mother, and other relations, are invariably inimical to the wife: it is therefore wájib that she should maintain her authority when thwarted in her views, by at least once a day using her fists, her teeth, and kicking, and pulling their hair, till tears come into their eyes, and fear prevents further interference with her plans.* Kulsúm Naneh says that she must continue this indomitable spirit of independence until she has fully established her power, and on all occasions she must ring in her husband's ears the threat of a divorce. If he still resists, she must redouble all the vexations which she knows from experience irritate his mind, and day and night add to the bitterness and misery of his condition. She must never, whether by day or by night, for a moment relax. For instance, if he condescends to hand her the

* The Wife of Bath again:—

I, like a dog, could bite as well as whine,
And first complained, whene'er the guilt was mine.

loaf, she must throw it from her, or at him, with indignation and contempt. She must make his shoe too tight for him, and his pillow a pillow of stone: so that at last he becomes weary of life, and is glad to acknowledge her authority. On the other hand, should these resources fail, the wife may privately convey from her husband's house every thing valuable that she can lay her hands upon, and then go to the Kází, and complain that her husband has beaten her with his shoe, and pretend to shew the bruises on her skin. She must state such facts in favour of her case as she knows cannot be refuted by evidence, and pursue every possible plan to escape from the thraldom she endures. For that purpose, every effort of every description is perfectly justifiable, and according to law.

V.

And the seven learned expounders of the customs regarding the conduct and demeanour of women in Persia declare, that among the forbidden things is that of allowing their features to be seen by men not wearing turbans, unless indeed they are handsome, and have soft and captivating manners; in that case their veils may be drawn aside without the apprehension of incurring blame, or in any degree exceeding the discretionary power with which they are traditionally

invested. But they must scrupulously and religiously abstain from all such liberties with Múllahs and Jews; since, respecting them, the prohibition is imperative. It is not necessary, however, to be very particular in the presence of common people; there is nothing criminal in being seen by singers, musicians, hammám-servants, and such persons as go about the streets to sell their wares and trinkets.

CHAPTER VIII.

Of Charms, and the means of destroying the effects of Witchcraft, with divers other Ordinances.

I.

THIS chapter refers to the charms and amulets which are worn to keep off the blight of an evil eye, and the wicked witchcraft of fortune-tellers and enchanters :* such as stags' antlers, wolf and tiger claws, and lizards, tied round children's

* It is much to the credit of Kulsúm Naneh and her colleagues, that no philtres or charms, or love potions, are recommended to make men obedient to the will of their wives. The Mussulman ladies of India are more crafty. "Many women," says the *Qanoon-e-Islam*, "make the men eat the flesh of the chameleon, and various kinds of wild roots, and herbs, and betel-nut. They likewise procure some of the ashes of the dead from the burning place of the Hindús, and having read some incantation over them, sprinkle them at night on the bed of the husband, or on himself, when asleep: or they apply to their own foreheads or eyebrows a well-known kind of philtre, in order that their husbands on beholding them may become enamoured and kind to them." These strange and revolting mixtures of unmentionable ingredients are concocted for the same purpose, none of which disgrace the pure pages of the learned seven.

necks. If a girl is of a timid disposition, place a frying-pan at the street-door and put fire into it to make it hot. The mother and daughter must then stand on one side of the frying-pan, close to each other, and every time they change hands they must scatter a little salt and water into it. They must then look steadfastly upon the frying-pan, and particularly upon the spot where the salt and water were thrown, and, wonderful to relate, the image of the beast or animal which is the secret cause of fear will be seen! Again, on a Sunday night take an unburnt brick, and pour some oil upon it, drop by drop, and with a knife scrape up wherever the oil has fallen, and say, this is the eye of such a one, man or woman, mentioning their names. After that put a piece of cotton and an egg upon the brick, then set fire to the cotton, and place the brick on the road. In returning home be careful not to look back. Kulsúm Naneh says, this is an excellent preservative against the evil eye. Again, the claws of the tiger and the wolf are also of great power in destroying the pernicious influence of enchanters. Some of these amulets are bound round the temples, and others over the shoulders, and some again near the heart.

II.

With regard to fortune-telling, a variety of stories are related. Take, hot from the oven, a

loaf that is joined to another, and throw them both at the head of the girl whose fortune is to be told. If they do not separate, she will soon be married.

III.

Take some bride-millet seed, called *arzen arúsi*, and when the bride is entering the bridal chamber, throw them backwards after her, pronouncing her name, and by counting the seeds that fall, her future fortune may be ascertained. Upon first seeing the new moon, a girl should look at a crow, that her destiny may be known: if the girl's eyes and the crow's eyes meet each other at the same moment, the omen is propitious. If the palm of the hand itches, rub it on the head of a boy whose father and mother are still living, and a present of money will be the consequence. If a dog catches a fly, take and wrap it up in the corner of a handkerchief, and undoubtedly some good will ensue. A kind and loving disposition is always considered sunnat, and worthy of being cultivated by the sex. If a woman's apparel is torn, and she wishes it to be restored to its former state, she must take something in her mouth and hold it till the repairs are completed; that is, she ought not to rest till the work is done. Others say, when a fire makes a crackling noise, cry 'kuch kuch,' three times, and undoubtedly the

sparks and the noise will cease. When you hear the summons of the Mu'azzin, kiss your index finger and pass it twice over your ears. That is sunnat mu'akkad. And the seven wise women declare that if any thing written in this book is rejected, and not faithfully attended to and practised, the offender will suffer for it, both in this world and the next. Again, on the very day a woman goes to the house of her husband, upon being married, it is necessary that every thing of importance relating to her own interest and advantage should be first settled; all arrangements made to secure her own comfort, and the uninterrupted exercise of her own will; so that she may be exonerated from the responsibility which might otherwise attach to her; for it is sunnat that all blame should be invariably laid upon the back of her husband: and whatever he does, she must require again of him, as if it had not been done at all. Kulsúm Naneh says, she is astonished how a woman can live all her life with one husband in one house.* Why should he deprive her of the full enjoyment of this world's comforts? Days and years roll on and are renewed, whilst a woman continues the same melancholy inmate, in

* In conformity with the well-known distich:

"The mouse that is content with one poor hole,
Can never be a mouse of any soul."

the same melancholy house of her husband. She has no renewal of happiness, none.

The seasons change, and Spring
Renews the bloom of fruit and flower;
And birds, with fluttering wing,
Give life again to dell and bower.

But what is woman's lot?
No change her anxious heart to cheer;
Confined to one dull spot,
To one dull husband all the year!

IV.

Bájí Yásmin says it is wájib to have bread of the blessed month of Ramazán on the table on the night of the *Nau-roz** festival: the others say it is sunnat. Shahr Bánú Dadeh recommends every man to steep the bread of the month of Ramazán in water, and also to kill a kid and eat it, and during that year he will have no pain in his throat. And it is further ordained and directed, that when a person dies it is necessary to spill all the water to be found in the house of the deceased, for if any one should drink of that water he will have an inflammation of the stomach. This doctrine is of the greatest consequence; and there are other matters which the whole conclave also consider of great moment. On Sundays and

* The first day of the Persian year, when the sun enters Aries; the festival of the vernal equinox.

Tuesdays, linen and cotton and earthen vessels should not be brought into the house. On Wednesdays the lamps should not be lighted. On Fridays neither wood nor bread should be received for consumption, nor furniture nor apparel washed on that day. On Sundays and Tuesdays we ought not to visit the sick. Those who are in one place on Saturday night, must be in the same place on the night of Sunday: and in this manner, every person who passes Thursday night in one place, must pass Friday night there also: and likewise he who passes Tuesday night in one place, must also be there on the night of Wednesday.*

* Such are the superstitious notions of the Persians. But the Mohammedans of India seem to be still more dependent on days and dates. In the *Qanoon-e-Islam* it is written, that if a person has his measure taken for new clothes on a Sunday, he will be found mournful and crying; if on a Monday, he will have ample food and provisions; if on a Tuesday, his clothes will be burnt; if on a Wednesday, he will enjoy happiness and tranquillity; if on a Thursday, it will be good and propitious; if on a Friday, well; on a Saturday, he will experience numerous troubles and misfortunes!! And according to the same authority, if a person bathe on a Sunday he will experience affliction; if on a Monday, his property will increase; if on a Tuesday, he will labour under anxiety of mind; if on a Wednesday, he will increase in beauty; if on a Thursday, his property will increase; if on a Friday, all his sins will be forgiven him!! if on a Saturday, all his ailments will be removed!!!

CHAPTER IX.

Of Guests and Visitors, and the lucky periods of their coming and departure.

I.

THE rules of hospitality regarding the reception and entertainment of guests or visitors have been slightly adverted to in a former chapter. There are lucky and unlucky days on this subject as in every other human proceeding, and it behoves every person to follow implicitly what tradition and experience have proved to be productive of the greatest good. Although it is not lucky for a guest to enter the house of a friend on a Wednesday night, Tuesday night is not liable to the same objection. The moment he arrives he is welcomed by being presented with the kalyún and coffee. And if your guest be a young man of noble presence and attractive manners, he is entitled to enjoy your hospitality for three days certain; after that, at his own option, he may be permitted to lengthen his stay: and it is wájib for the young mistress of the house, in the mean time, unknown

to her husband, to seek every convenient opportunity to converse with him and exchange vows of friendship, so dear and consoling to youthful hearts. And, on any occasion, should her return home be delayed till a late hour, a ladder may be placed against the wall, that she may enter the house by the door on the terrace, unseen.* And the guest should be presented with a red apple, or a yellow quince, and sugar-cake and aromatics as a token of kindness and favour. Bíbí Ján Afróz insists, that after a guest has eaten his fill at dinner, it is wájib to take up two or three large morsels of meat, and present them to him to eat, whether he will or not, and if he cannot swallow the whole, another banquet must be given the following night. And also, whenever female friends are entertained by the husband and wife, every thing that transpires must be repeated, and commented upon to other friends. Besides, Kulsúm Naneh says, whenever a youth of prepossessing exterior, expressive eyes, and smiling mouth is invited to a house, the wife must take an opportunity of whispering softly in his ear, "*Khúsh Amadíd*," "You are welcome." And whatever

* House tops in most countries of the East are terraced and flat.

passes between them she must relate to her familiar associates and friends, without omitting the smallest particular in the account. This is wájib.

II.

With respect to marriage and bridehood, and whatever depends upon them, it is proper, when a woman is engaged, that all conjugal arrangements should be completed at once. They present a lighted candle before her face, and place the Korán near her, and a mirror, and also a tray with ambergris-tapers, different kinds of perfume, some arzen and dried dates, called *kyáni morád*, and cress-seed, aspund, and other articles required by ancient usage. And it is proper, also, that a person should stand at the head of the bride and pronounce the Khotbeh of Hazrat Adam, and they should also throw over the head of the bride a sort of veil of a green colour, so that her whole person may be enveloped in its folds. The bride herself must not speak to any one. She must then be undressed, even her gauze chemise taken off, and whilst thus hid from view, a large brass basin must be turned upside down, and a lighted lamp put under it, fed with oil made of ox-fat. Upon this basin they must place a saddle, if they have one, and then a pillow, on which the bride is

seated, the attendants singing aloud:

"The husband is saddled, the journey begun,
And the beautiful bride her own race has to run."

III.

The veil, or rather drapery of ample dimensions, which is brought for the bride from the house of the bridegroom, is always thrown over the head of the bride whilst the marriage ceremony is being performed. Kulsúm Naneh and Khála Ján Aghá recommend the bride to tie privately some aromatic seeds in her dress, and when she is taken to the house of her husband she must eat them, so as to have always a sweet breath in his presence. Shahr Bánú Dádeh says, she may present to her husband some of the seeds, which, for the same reason, will have a good effect. The other members of the conclave contend that it is not right for the bride, at the time of the nuptials, to use henna, or wear a peculiar ornament on her head. But it is wájib that she should be continually looking in her glass. Dadeh Bazm Arú says, the bride should take a hen's egg in her hand, and on getting up throw it against the wall to break it, keeping her face towards the Kibleh, or in the direction of Mecca. Kulsúm Naneh thinks that a useless proceeding, and recommends a needle to be presented to her on her marriage;

and Dadeh Bazm Ará says, that a piece of green silk ought to be sent along with the needle, that her good fortune may ever flourish. Black and blue, and yellow silk are not lucky, but white and purple are. And the conclave hold it unquestionable, that a girl unhusbanded ought never to use the núra, the substance for destroying, and preventing the growth of, hair. It is indeed strictly forbidden; and if it be necessary to remove hair, it must be taken away by other means.

IV.

It is wájib for a mother to instruct her daughter, even from the tenderest age, how to conduct herself, according to what has been, and what will be laid down in this book for her guidance. She must especially teach her the arts of endearment, how to dart amorous glances with effect, how to play off coquettish airs, blandishments, heart-ravishing smiles, and, in short, every characteristic of an accomplished beauty must be placed at her command. This is wájib and sunnat; since, when she is taken to her husband's house, she may probably have no opportunity of learning these important acquirements. It is always wájib to obtain, and to desire information from the seven wise women. Kulsúm Naneh says, that among the things of greatest importance to be observed

by the bride on going to bed is a devout prayer, involving blessings especially on her own head. She may say in her heart:

"Holy Prophet! grant, I pray,
On this happy nuptial day,
That my husband, and his mother,
Cousin, uncle, sister, brother,
May, from all suspicion free,
Never be unkind to me;
That from morn till night they may
Never frown at what I say,
What I want, or what I do;
But, to all my interests true,
Sanction, without stint or measure,
Every thing that yields me pleasure."

V.

And the same learned personage urges the importance of every woman, before she goes to the house of the bridegroom, being made to understand the things that are wájib and sunnat respecting herself. Such matters are recorded in this excellent book, in order that she may not suffer for want of information on a subject so dear to her own interests and personal convenience.

CHAPTER X.

Of male and female Gossips and Intimates.

I.

For a woman to be without familiar friends of her own sex is reckoned a heavy misfortune, and there is no one so poor who does not struggle hard to avoid so great a curse. Kulsúm Naneh and the other members of the learned conclave agree in thinking that a woman dying without friends or gossips has no chance of going to heaven; whereas happy is that woman whose whole life is passed in constant intercourse with kind associates, for she will assuredly go to heaven. What can equal the felicity of that woman whose daily employment is sauntering hand in hand with friends, amidst rose-bowers and aromatic groves, and visiting every place calculated to expand and exhilarate the heart? That woman, at the day of resurrection, will be seen dancing with her old companions on earth, in the regions of bliss. Kulsúm Naneh says, the very circumstance of living in such a state of social freedom and harmony always produces a forgiveness of sins. And Khála Ján Aghá, Bájí

Yásmin, Shahr Bánú Dadeh, and Bíbí Ján Afróz concur in opinion, that if a damsel dies before she has established a circle of intimates, to whom she can communicate her most secret thoughts and actions, the other world can never be to her a scene of happiness and joy. But if she is more favourably circumstanced, every supplication for pardon will have the effect of angel-prayers; and this is the reward of those who in this life cultivate social connexions, and are bound in the endearing ties of friendship.

II.

A woman should prefer residing near a place of prayer, where young men mostly assemble. If at Isfahán, near the Masjidi Sháh, built by the renowned Sháh Abbás, the superb dome of which is covered with blue enamelled tiles, highly polished and glittering in the sun; and also near that of Lutf Alí, both of them being situated close to the Maidáni Sháh, for there the flower of the land in strength and beauty may be seen. If at Shíráz, near the Sháh Chirágh, in the centre of the city, a place of the greatest sanctity, containing the mausoleum of the Imám Syad Mír Ahmed Ibn Músá;* for there the streets and

* The Sháh Chirágh, or mausoleum of Ahmed Ibn Músá, is a place of great antiquity and of miraculous sanctity. According to the chronicles of the Masjid, when Amír Sultán Azíd ud Doulah

paths are crowded with young men of the most agreeable aspect and winning address, regaling

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Doulah came to the holy sepulchre, he ordered it to be opened, which being done, the sacred corpse was discovered to the eyes of the Sultán and those that were with him. Upon the tomb they perceived a lighted candle, scented with camphire, and the body of that holy person appeared quite fresh and sweet, as if but lately interred, whilst from the blessed tomb there was emitted the scent of pure musk and ambergris, and from the top of the dome the rays of a clear and bright light were reflected around. It is further related, that Sultán Azíd ud Doulah, and those who were with him, observed on the finger of the corpse a seal-ring, on which was engraved words in Arabic to the following effect, "Glory to the Most High, Ahmed, the son of Músá;" and moreover the Sultán drew this ring off the finger, when suddenly it became invisible to him, and was on the finger of another of the company (but God knows who! says the chronicle). The Sultán at this time was afflicted with a violent asthma, and the moment he entered the holy sepulchre, by virtue of that sacred body, he became perfectly cured, without the smallest trace of his disorder remaining; in acknowledgment of which great blessing the Sultán determined on rebuilding and beautifying the sacred tomb. And Bíbí Ján Khátim rebuilt the tower which had fallen into decay, and those apartments which are about the area, both above and below, as also the market-place adjoining the maidán or square, and richly endowed the place with extensive lands in the village of Maimún. Mír Habíb Allah was the last beautifier of this celebrated edifice. The whole document is translated in Francklin's Tour to Persia.

Ibn Batúta, the Arabian traveller, also speaks of this famous musjid, in which is the tomb of the Imám Abú Abdallah, who

on fruits, and sherbet, and coffee. And the tombs of Sa'dí and Háfíz are also frequented by persons of superior worth, who sit by the lone stream of Roknábád in the Spring season, and drink its pure waters, uttering in sorrow the following plaintive stanzas:

There the clear sparkling streamlet of Roknábád flows,
  There the love-bower of Háfíz once shed its perfume;
There the nightingale warbled his vows to the rose,
  And the flowers of all dyes were accustomed to bloom.

But the summer is past, all is changed, and in vain
  Do we look for the groves which resounded of yore
With the nightingale's song, and the minstrel's sweet strain,
  For their music has ceased, and the groves are no more.

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who made known the way from India to the mountain of Serindeb. One of HIS *miracles* is thus related: Whilst wandering over the mountains of Ceylon with about thirty fakeers, these persons were suffering from extreme hunger, and consulted the saint on the necessity of slaughtering and eating an elephant, which he positively refused and forbade. They nevertheless killed and ate the elephant, but he refused to touch a morsel. When they had all gone to sleep, the elephants came in a body, and smelling one of them, put him to death. They next came to the Sheikh, but did *him* no harm. One of them, however, lifted him up in his trunk and conveyed him to some houses, where he laid him down and walked off. The people on seeing this were much astonished, and took him to their king, who treated him with great kindness and respect. —See the translation by the Rev. Samuel Lee, Chaplain to the Earl of Munster.

Only thy limpid current remains, Roknábád!
How thy desolate waters, unsheltered, roll on!
Like an orphan deserted, thy murmurs are sad,
Since thy friends and companions are withered and gone.

III.

Kulsúm Naneh says the women who are anxious to be admired must be dressed in all their ornaments, and perfumed with ottar; and if they are presented with a cup of sherbet they must drink it as an acknowledgment of a friendly disposition, and act in every respect according to the instructions laid down in this valuable book. Kulsúm Naneh again says, when two women are strongly attached to each other, they must continue inseparable friends through good report and evil report, and be ever faithful to the last; and when one of them dies, the survivor, whether in her promenades in the rose-garden, visiting the bath, or assisting at the making of semnú, must keep her deceased favourite in remembrance, and in her devotions never forget to pray for her happiness in the next world. This is sunnat.

IV.

On a Wednesday night fill a vase or earthen vessel with water, take it up stairs into a westerly room, and at day-light throw both pot and water together into the street. This will assuredly prevent the occurrence of any accident to the people of the house for that day. Dadeh Bazm

Ará observes, that there ought to be rose-water in the vessel, and her colleagues support the same opinion. Shahr Bánú Dadeh thinks, that when the person takes up the earthen pot she ought to say, at the moment of throwing it from the window,

"This vessel I throw,
In the street below,
That to-day we may know
Neither sorrow nor woe."

In descending, the person ought not to look back; for Dadeh Bazm Ará adds, that if the person does look back, fate will have its course on that day. Bájí Yásmin contends, that there certainly ought to be a pleasant perfume of some kind in the vessel, to increase its efficacy.

V.

When a person is setting out on a journey, fill a cup with water, and take up a looking-glass and some green leaves, and at the moment of his departure scatter the water after him, that he may quickly return. Again; it is not lucky to sweep the house on a Wednesday. Keep a filbert and some almonds by you, and you will be safe from the bite of a scorpion. In the Moharram it is wájib to break the seeds of a melon and eat them, rejecting their outer rind, to prevent the quinsy. When a woman commences any under-

taking she must place her foot lightly on the palm of her hand to ensure a fortunate result. On the first night of every month it is wájib to wash the kitchen threshold. If a husband conducts himself with severity towards his wife, he must be under the influence of an enchanter, and for the purpose of removing the accursed spell, it is wájib that cold water should be poured over his head on three successive Wednesdays. When a person has set his heart and soul on any enterprize, turning over his daughter's water-jug will doubtless contribute to his success. And if, whilst on a journey, a crow caws on the house-top, the journey will be easily brought to an end. When one lamp is burning, you must not light another; if you do, extinguish the first and let the second burn. If a person is on his travels, and tidings are brought of his death, and those tidings prove to be untrue, when he returns home he must enter his house by the door on the terrace. And it is very unlucky for a person to take water or fire out of the house at sun-set. Again, if a kettle or frying-pan, or other utensil of the kind is received into the house at night, it is wájib to sprinkle a little water upon it, and say,

"Spirits of the Evil One!
Get ye hence, away, begone!

Scatter not your poison-dew,
Near the house of Moslem true."

And it is proper to add—

"Glorious prophet, we are thine!
Prostrate at thy holy shrine;
Firm adherents of the Faith!
Moslems, even unto death!
Keep, then, from us spirits dire
Sent by Iblís in his ire;
Keep away dark charm and spell,
Keep us far from demon fell;
Keep, oh keep, we thee implore,
Ghoul and goblin from our door."*

VI.

Now if any woman, regardless of her good fame and character, and any man desirous of doing that which is praiseworthy, and just, and lawful, should neglect the golden rules contained in these pages, they will deviate from the path of rectitude, and forfeit the indulgent opinion of the wise and the good.

* The dread of the ghoul, or goblin, is very great among the Persians. The ghoul is a lonely demon—*ghúli bíában*,—it is the dragon or fiend of the desert, and in Kábul they represent him, says Mr. Elphinstone, as a gigantic and frightful spectre. He devours both the living and the dead!

CHAPTER XI.

Of the composition of Semnú, for presents.

I.

THIS chapter is explanatory of what the seven wise women consider as sunnat mu'akkad, or confirmed and established laws. There is indeed no important part of a woman's conduct or duty in the management of her household concerns, which is not prescribed and laid down in these pages. The hospitality and sociability which prevail in Persia have introduced a great variety of presents and offerings in cookery among the women; and one of the most popular dishes in their catalogue is called semnú, considered wájib by the expounders of the law. The preparation of this offering is as follows: First scatter some wheat upon a board, and throw over the whole a cloth; then water it once a day till green sprouts appear, upon which occasion you must call your kindred and friends together, and it is complimentary to send every person so called a blue seed, or green leaf, as a token of cordiality.

When the women are assembled, each with a pair of scissors clips off the stalk from the head of the grain, and at the moment of doing this she must express what her wishes are. The stalks being cut off, the fibres must be bruised and the juice poured into a kettle or boiler. To one *mun* (80lbs.) of wheat, four muns of flour are added. If less than that quantity is used, the semnú is not good. There must also be put into it, to give it a flavour, walnuts and almonds, and at night a lamp should be placed near the kettle, and music should be produced from as many instruments as can be obtained; and the more the women sing and play, and make merry, the better. Thus the night of preparation must be kept alive by harmony and rejoicing, and every prayer put forth over the kettle will, without doubt, be peculiarly acceptable. As soon as morning dawns, incense must be burned freely, and then it is the business of the mistress of the house to place her hand in the kettle, so as to leave an impression of her blessed fingers upon the surface of the semnú. Day being advanced, the women engaged in this employment again put up their prayers, again burn incense, and invoke blessings on their work, and then divide and place the semnú on china and other dishes, and take it to their several homes. This is wájib; for Bájí Yásmin says, repeating the old stanza—

Wherever this semnú is found,
Neither care nor misfortune can come;
'Tis a charm which makes pleasure abound,
Whether met with abroad or at home!

II.

Dadeh-Bazm Arâ says that poppy seed ought to be scattered over the semnú. That, she considers indispensable; and it is also positively commanded that the dish which contains the semnú, and is taken to every house, should not be washed, but when emptied a sprinkling of perfume only is necessary. There are many opinions respecting the etymology of the name: some think the word was originally sé-mun, now corrupted and changed into semnú. Those most familiar with the preparation of this composition observe that it consists of three muns of flour and one of wheat, and thence called semnú. Dadeh-Bazm Arâ and Shahr-Bánú Dadeh are of opinion, that the name comes from there being three muns of flour and three of wheat. But Kulsúm Naneh says that it consists of three things,—flour, water, and wheat, and it is therefore called semnú:

Take three, and three, and three,
In three there is a charm.

This derivation is supposed to be the true one;

for seh (three) mun, they observe, might be easily converted into semnú.*

III.

If a woman wishes to make semnú, and indeed is resolved to make it, and her husband will not incur the expense, saying he cannot afford it, it is then wájib for that woman to sell any part of her husband's property, to enable her to carry into effect her fixed determination. Before God and his Prophet such conduct would not be reprehensible. It is also wájib and sunnat that she should collect the means in every possible way, to pay the expenses of feasts to her intimates, going to the bath, and other indulgences, without fear of being chastised or reproved by her parsimonious husband, who ought to be thus reminded of his duty.

IV.

There are many methods of producing an increase to a family. By some it is recommended to put a tray in an unoccupied house, with meat and refreshments upon it of seven kinds, fruits, sherbet, sugar-candy, and musk. On a

* Richardson, in his Dictionary, describes semnú as oblong pieces of meat, paste, &c.; a soup made of dates, honey, and a little flour; or any sweet dish!

Friday night remove the tray, and light four large lamps with sufficient oil to burn till morning. When it is day, the master, who is anxious to have his wishes realized, goes to the tray to see what has been eaten by the birds. Of every dish that has been eaten, every year the same quantity must be dressed and presented to your friends and neighbours, till your object is accomplished. With respect to the women who have no children, the opinions of the members of the conclave are various and contradictory. Kulsúm Naneh says that a barren woman ought to pour some rose-water into the mouth of a dead dog on a Wednesday night, that she may bear children. The other members of the conclave say, that she should at night go upon the roof of the bath, and, taking up a glass with sweetmeats, throw them into the cistern below. If a smart sound arise, she will doubtless become pregnant; but if, on the contrary, a dull sound arise, she will remain barren. Bíbí Ján Afróz directs a barren person, when going into the bath, to give a little shíríní to the oldest bathing woman present whilst the cistern is filling, and doubtless she will become a mother.

V.

The Persian women have also a kind of pottage-offering, which is recommended to be given

on a Wednesday, in the month of Saffar, particularly the last Wednesday, which has more influence than any other day. Kulsúm Naṅeh says that these and all other propitious charms are best administered in the Moharrem; whilst others, again, think their efficacy more decided at other periods of the year. They all agree that a woman should always begin to wear a new garment on a Wednesday.

CHAPTER XII.

Of Fruits and Flowers, as symbols of feeling and passion.

I.

One of the fancies of women, in which they frequently indulge, is making puppets, or dolls, called little brides. And it is proper that each puppet should have a partner, or companion, that the object in view may be fulfilled. Every person who is blessed with gossiping friends and associates makes one, and dresses it in rich attire, and places it on a tray with sweetmeats and green leaves, and gives it to a confidential domestic to be presented to her dear favourite. And it is proper for the woman who carries the puppet to say, "I have brought this offering for you from such a one." If that woman or damsel who receives the offering is partial to the sender, she kisses the puppet and rejoices, and gives it a khilát, with a suitable present to the bearer; but if she has little or no regard for the party, the puppet is dressed in black and returned. The observance of this rule is sunnat mu'akkad.

In those cases where the offering is accepted with satisfaction, a banquet takes place, with music and dancing.

Then does the sprightly heart rebound,
Arch smiles and laughing jokes go round,
The joyous dancers beat the ground,
And anklet-bells with tinkling sound,
Betoken their delight.

And nosegays sweet, of brightest hue,
The crimson rose and violet blue,
Which in the Prophet's garden grew,
Refreshed by heaven's delicious dew,
Are interchanged by lovers true,
On that inspiring night.

And amidst this gay scene, with infinite good-humour, the wiser ones communicate to the less informed whatever it may be necessary and proper for them to learn and to know.

II.

The conclave also adduce a great number of things expressive of sentiment and passion, and the following effusion from a Persian poet is on the same fanciful subject.

For lovers!—fruits and flowers possess
A charm, and joy or grief express;
Their influence heart can break or bless.

And as their various powers they try,
They hope, despair, rejoice, or die.
A youth, in passion's whirlpool tost,
His peace of mind for ever lost,
With eyes all tears, his colour gone,
Thus fondly, wildly, makes his moan:
"Since thou wert in an evil hour
Bestowed on me, thou regal flower;*
Like Majnún† mad, thou mayst discern,
I in the fire of absence burn.
Unhappy flower! the curse of heaven
Had better far than thee been given.
And Hul too is a symbol true,
It tells of heart-wounds ever new,
And many a rending tale of grief,
How worm destroys the rose's leaf;
It tells how sorrow poisons sleep,
And how for thee I groan and weep;
With love my soul is void of light,
With love my hair is silver white;
Sweet idol! not one transient smile,
A lover's anguish to beguile!
Darchini‡ cannot sooth my woe,
My tongue has almost turned my foe,
And fails to plead the cause of one
By thy resistless charms undone;

* The rose. † See the note at page 37.
‡ Cinnamon.

FULFUL* amidst the flames I've thrown,
In hopes to make thee all my own;
But Fulful cannot cure the pain
Which tears my heart, and dries my brain;
It seems to drive thee farther hence,
And render keener every sense;
I stand remembering thee so much,
In thought thy glowing lips I touch,
But all in vain, these doating eyes
Behold how quick thy image flies;
It vanishes before my sight,
And leaves me dark as moonless night.
SAFFRON! thou tell'st a tale, as true,
My cheek presents a yellow hue;
O may'st thou feel misfortune never,
But smile in joy and gladness ever;
Absent from thee my wounds are deep,
I sit and sigh, and wail, and weep.
A prisoner in thy toils, alone,
The perfume of my heart is gone.
O PEACH! thou art for lovers meet,
For thou art soft, and moist, and sweet;
Thy cheek an orange tint displays,
And thou canst charm a thousand ways.
ANÁR!† from thee removed I feel
Acuter sorrow through me steal;
Thy friendship is a source of pleasure,
Thou art my own, my darling treasure.

* Long pepper. † Pomegranate.

And thou sweet TULIP! when from thee,
What am I but a withered tree?
By cruel fortune disunited,
We meet not, and all hope is blighted,
What! does my anguish raise a smile?
Can scorn that beauteous brow defile?
I would not for the world that thou
Shouldst feel the torture I do now;
From morn till eve, and eve till morn,
I wander desolate, forlorn;
No eye to pity, voice to bless,
None to relieve my wretchedness.
O had I wings to thee I'd fly,
And at thy feet in rapture die.
As slender as a thread I'm grown,
'Misery has worn me to the bone;'*
Yet is my heart capacious still,
It pants for thee, and ever will;
O give it then, in pity give
One soothing smile, and bid it live;
Since I have, faith and truth to prove,
Abandoned all for thee, my love!"

And here endeth the admirable precepts, the golden ordinances of the seven wise women of Persia.

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* It may appear odd enough to make a Persian poet quote the words of Shakespear; but the idea is strictly the same, and literally—"With misery on thy account I am become like bone."

As in a landscape we have often seen
Art strive with Nature—softly flowing rills,
And towers, and palaces, and copses green,
And shadowy walks, and purple-tinted hills;—
So here a perfect picture you may view,
By Kulsúm Naneh skilfully designed;
Rules, precepts, laws, laid down to nature true,
To store, enrich, and dignify the mind,
And vindicate the ways of peerless woman-kind.

One word more. Those who wilfully act in a manner contrary to the spirit of Kulsúm Naneh's laws, must be looked upon as examples to be shunned. It is thus that we learn goodness by avoiding the practices of the wicked. Accordingly, to illustrate this maxim, a passage from the poet Sa'dí is quoted, in which he says:—

"Who, in Politeness, Lokmán, was thy guide?"
"The Unpolite," the learned sage replied.

THE END.

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Government of Maharashtra
on 27 February, 2016